

The Ultimate Pushup Workout p.42

THE MAGAZINE MEN LIVE BY

# Men's Health

FREE PULLOUT PLAN

## ABS & ARMS

IN 27 MINUTES!

P.89

NAUGHTY  
SEX

SHE WANTS  
IT BAD

P.30

AMAZING  
TACO  
TRICKS!

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Add Years  
to Your Life—  
IN 20 SECONDS!

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Colin Farrell's  
SUCCESS  
FORMULA  
(Defiance + Grit)

102  
INSTANT STYLE  
UPGRADES  
(FLIP THIS)

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**ON THE COVER**  
Colin Farrell, photographed by Matthias Vriens-McGrath. Styling by Brian Boyé and Sandra Nygaard, grooming by Sacha Quarles/Obliphica Professional, production by Emily Roth/Productit. Calvin Klein T-shirt, Denim & Supply Ralph Lauren jeans, Will Leather Goods belt





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#### FALL 2015 GUIDE TO STYLE

Toss those ratty sweaters and  
fat-guy pants already! Flip this  
issue over for a style upgrade,  
and find out how to ace the  
three looks you need for  
any occasion.





Touchdown catches are easy. But can you kick the extra point?

## 1 2 3 4 5

### MAKE THE MOST OF THE LAST DAYS OF SUMMER!

CAP OFF THE SEASON WITH 5 CHALLENGES. THEN TELL THE WORLD HOW IT ALL WENT DOWN.

#### Trek to an IMAX 3D theater to watch *Everest*.

The adventure film (opening 9/18) is a thrill, but resolve to go a step further. Take a weekend hike up to the highest point around. (Floridians: Pretend.) Think deep thoughts, then dig deep: Make a donation to Nepal earthquake relief. Go to [oxfamamerica.org](http://oxfamamerica.org).



#### Host your hood's most nutritious cookout ever.

Harvest time! Have your neighbors bring all their extra tomatoes, zucchini, peppers—whatever they're trying to unload—or hit a farmers' market. Then start grilling, because everything's better with a little char. Even pizza. The proof's at Guy Gourmet on [MensHealth.com](http://MensHealth.com).



#### Gain newfound respect for NFL placekickers.

Mark this season's opener (9/10, Steelers at Patriots) by trying the new, longer 33-yard extra point. The key, says Cody Parkey of the Eagles: "Stay down on the ball and don't open up your hips too soon." Oh, and be sure your ball is properly inflated. Right, Tom?



#### Give the kids an astronomy lesson they won't forget.

On September 27, regale the little ones with the Legend of the Harvest Moon—that if they don't eat the vegetables Daddy grilled, the moon will disappear. Then film their stricken reaction to the lunar eclipse. Or just explain about the earth's shadow.

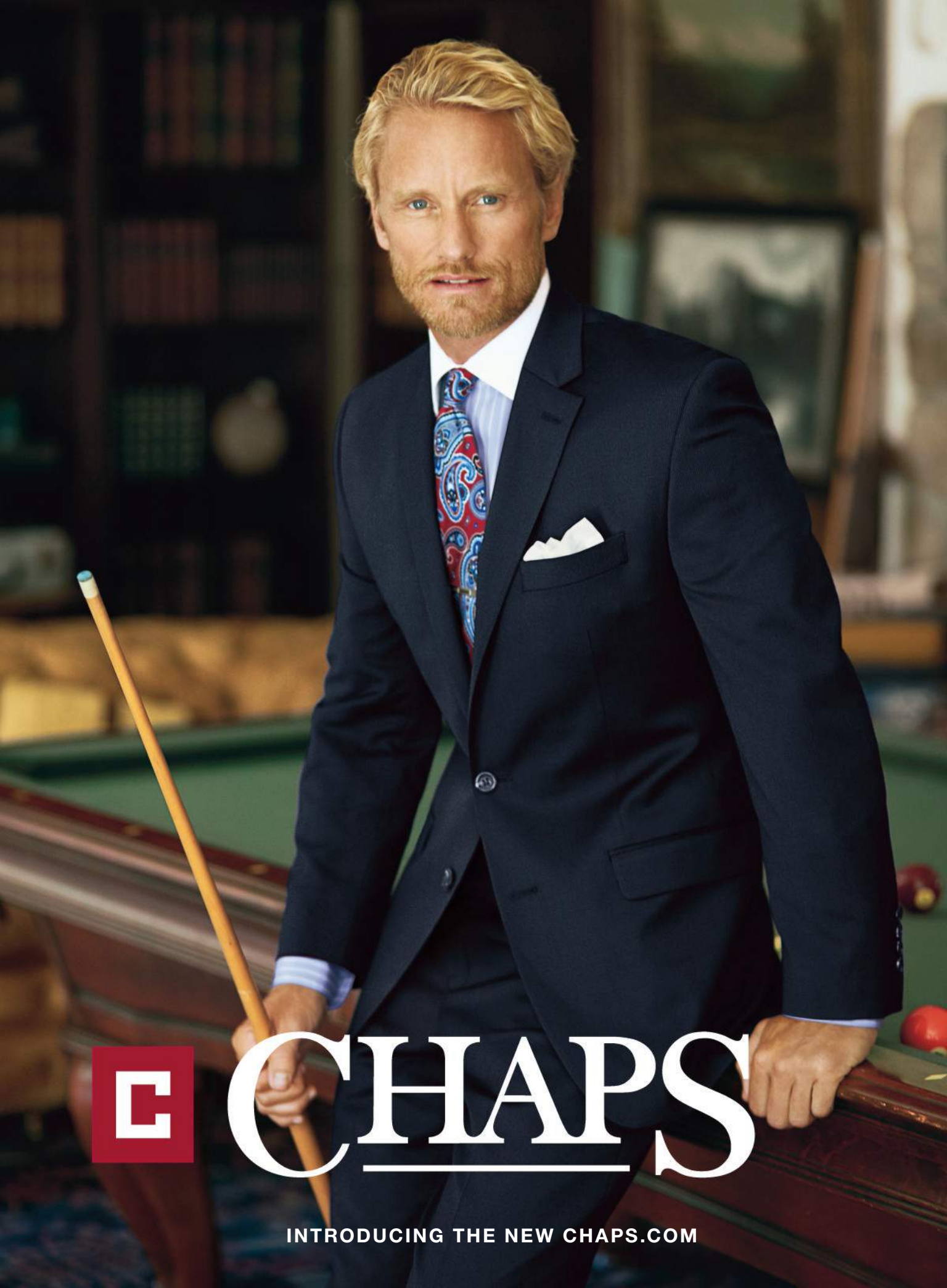


#### Find a vineyard, sample the wares, and do science.

Watch the fermenting fun at a winery. One study from Italy found that regular, moderate intake of red wine may help with female desire. The sample size was small, so more research is needed. In the name of science, go buy a bottle and test out that theory.







# CHAPS

INTRODUCING THE NEW [CHAPS.COM](http://CHAPS.COM)



# Can Instagram Build Muscle?

■ YOU KNOW THOSE SPORTSCENTER COMMERCIALS WHERE LEBRON JAMES IS WORKING away in his cubicle, or Peyton and Eli Manning are jostling in the hallway? It's been kind of like that around the *Men's Health* offices lately, ever since BJ Gaddour came on board this summer as our new fitness director.

Not only is BJ a hulk of a man (6'2" and 225 pounds of pure muscle), but he's as close to fitness royalty as it gets. You surely know him, even if you don't know his name. He's starred in our bestselling follow-along DVDs and written fitness books while also giving rock-hard advice in every issue.

What he isn't: just another hardbody. BJ knows fitness like no one else, and now he's sharing that expertise 24-7 on all our platforms, print and digital. If you follow **@menshealthmag** on Instagram, then you've probably noticed his impact already: BJ has been posting dozens of daily tips and short videos every week. He's doing the same across Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as well. I've built muscle simply by liking his Instagram posts!

I'm also excited to announce that BJ is launching a new daily video series at [MensHealth.com](http://MensHealth.com). You'll find it on the home page or by bookmarking **MensHealth.com/dailyfitness**. Every day you'll find new routines, tips, and motivation. Whether you're a novice looking to drop a few pounds or a CrossFitter seeking new ways to kick your own ass, BJ's got you covered.

BJ's got you covered in this issue too. Turn to page 42 for the best pushup workout ever. And remember those dusty 10-pound dumbbells sitting in the corner of your basement? See page 44 to put them to use. On page 82, we explore Gym Jones, the place where Hollywood A-listers go when they need screen-ready muscle. You'll learn their secrets—and then build your own brawn—with our "Jacked by Gym Jones" pullout workout on page 89.

Not bad for BJ's first month. Now get to work! He's watching, you know.



Bill

Bill Phillips,  
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*Men's Health* carries the very latest health, fitness, and nutrition reporting and taps the world's foremost experts so you can be more knowledgeable about your health. But every body is different. Take what you read here as general information; individual diagnoses and treatments can come only from a health care practitioner.



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"I offer lots of  
style advice to the guys  
in the office. Such as:  
'Uh, actually you do look  
fat in that outfit.'"

## FAVORITE MH TIP

TRAVEL CAN INSPIRE GREAT DESIGN.  
SEE SOMETHING COOL AT A HOTEL?  
SNAP A PIC AND ADAPT IT AT  
HOME. FIND MORE COOL STUFF  
IN THE MH GUIDE TO STYLE  
(FLIP THIS ISSUE).



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"I check and  
recheck every fact.  
Like whether kinky  
women in Portugal  
prefer handcuffs (p. 30)."

## FAVORITE MH TIP

ALWAYS TAKE YOUR HEALTH  
ADVICE WITH A GRAIN OF SALT.  
(EXCEPT THE ADVICE IN THIS  
MAGAZINE, OF COURSE. TRUST  
US: WE CHECKED.)

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"All those splashy,  
high-impact Web ads?  
Yeah, that's me! I love the  
MH fitness philosophy:  
Big results in little time."

## FAVORITE MH TIP

YOU CAN BURN MORE CALORIES  
IN A HALF HOUR OF HIIT THAN IN  
AN HOUR OF STEADY CARDIO.  
WHAT IS HIIT, YOU ASK?  
SEE PAGE 70.



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# RULES I LIVE BY Delaying Death

What our health and fitness experts do to add years to their expiration dates.



## Tune Up Your Brain Every Day

"Keeping your brain active is essential for preserving mental agility. **Playing a musical instrument taps multiple brain regions**, for example; it's mental exercise. I play the violin terribly, but I'm always learning new things. I also solve the Sunday *New York Times* crossword every single week. Plus, I nourish my brain by drinking two cups of coffee a day; it's a simple, productive way to reduce stroke risk."

**David S. Liebeskind, M.D.**, associate neurology director, UCLA Stroke Center, Los Angeles



## Add Fido and Fiber to Your Life

"To maintain a strong, lean body, I emphasize high-fiber plant foods—vegetables, fruits, lentils and other beans, whole grains, nuts, and seeds. I also choose high-quality proteins like fish. Daily exercise is nonnegotiable. I'd rather be late to a meeting or adjust my schedule than miss a workout. **I also try to walk my dogs or ride my horse every day.** The honesty and simplicity of animal friendship is therapeutic, especially considering the complexities we encounter in our fellow homo sapiens."

**David Katz, M.D., M.P.H., FACPM, F.A.C.P.**, founding director, Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center; author, *Disease-Proof*



## Last Longer... with Her

"I never go to bed angry; my husband and I work out our differences with compassion and love, and we always try to consider each other's perspective. **Keeping your relationship healthy is a proven way to help you live longer.** I also like to keep candles at our bedside. Studies show that a romantic setting is a turn-on for most men and women. Besides, we all look better in candlelight."

**Debby Herbenick, Ph.D., M.P.H.**, director, Indiana University Center for Sexual Health Promotion; author, *The Coregasm Workout*



## Dial Back Your Stress

"I try to diminish stress several times a day. Doing this helps lower my heart attack and hypertension risk and leads to a longer, happier life. I pause for 10 to 15 minutes and do slow, deep breathing while focusing on a happy, heartwarming memory. Plus, **I spend 15 minutes a day speaking with a close friend or family member**, either in person or by phone or Skype. So many men don't view this as a practice to live by, but nurturing these connections can enhance your emotional life as well as your longevity."

**William Pollack, Ph.D.**, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry, Harvard Medical School department of psychiatry



## Make Room for Flex Time

"I train almost every day. **Muscular strength is a robust indicator of longevity**, and cardiovascular health is just as critical. I vary the length and intensity of my cardio, and also switch up my rep counts for a given muscle group on alternate strength-training days (so 3 to 5 reps one day, 5 to 10 reps the next). For years I felt that missing a workout was a disaster, but exercise shouldn't be so rigid. Now if I'm pressed for time, I'll run, hike, or go biking with my son."

**Mark Peterson, Ph.D., C.S.C.S.\*D.**, professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation, University of Michigan Medical School, Ann Arbor

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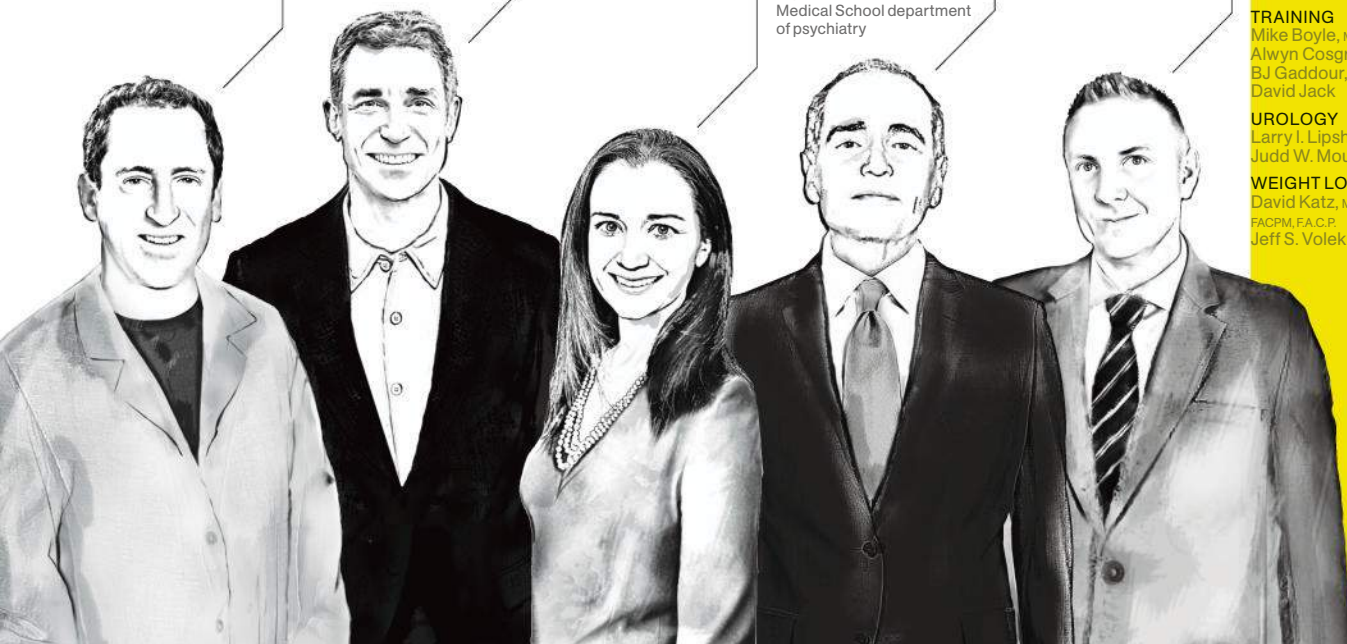
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Prototype shown with options. Production model will vary. ©2015 Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.



**Let's  
Go  
Places**



# Claw Your Way to the Top

When Tommy Caldwell, 37, free-climbed El Capitan's 3,000-foot Dawn Wall in January, the world followed via Instagram and Facebook. He and fellow climber Kevin Jorgeson completed their ascent using ropes for safety only—not assistance. Follow Caldwell's advice on grit and drive, and scale your own heights.

## FIND YOUR WALL

"For me, climbing is like food—I have to have it," Caldwell says. Once you find that hunger, you've found your calling. "The stuff that motivates you, you just keep going back," he says.

## BUILD A MENTAL MAP

Over seven years, Caldwell mastered the Dawn Wall in sections, holding off on the full climb—which took 19 days!—until he could visualize each move. "I memorized every body position and how each finger fit into each hold," he says. "I can still run the whole climb in my head." Think about that before a big product launch or sales pitch. Once you can see a detailed mental picture of your success, you're ready.

## HARNESS YOUR BUTTERFLIES

Don't fear stress, says Caldwell. It's your body's way of signaling that you're on the cusp of a breakthrough. "That crazy feeling in my stomach tells me I'm pursuing something that's worth pursuing," he says. Welcome the nerves you feel before a presentation or job interview.

## IGNORE THE NEGATIVITY

In 2001, Caldwell lost half of his left index finger in a table saw accident. "The doctor told me, 'You won't be a professional climber anymore,'" says Caldwell. "That lit a fire in me. I came out determined to prove him wrong." The lesson: Don't blame your circumstances for your shortcomings. (But try not to cut off a finger, okay?)

## ANTICIPATE YOUR FALL

"Truly challenging yourself means failure is a real possibility," says Caldwell. "In climbing, we spend our days failing over and over." But each failure is a chance for growth; keep that in mind the next time a big project unravels. —CLINT CARTER

**"THAT CRAZY FEELING IN MY STOMACH TELLS ME I'M PURSUING SOMETHING THAT'S WORTH PURSUING."**







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OF GENIUS, ONE AFTER ANOTHER.



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# Ask MH™

LIFE'S QUESTIONS, ANSWERED

## How do I resist the urge to text while driving?

BILL, LOS ANGELES, CA

Three steps: Open trunk, insert phone, close trunk. Studies show that even when people turn off phone notifications, they still feel compelled to check their devices. According to technology addiction expert David Greenfield, Ph.D., we may crave the dopamine rush that receiving info produces. So after you stow your phone, crank up the tunes—listening to a favorite song can trigger a similar dopamine hit, a Canadian study found. Need your phone's GPS? The app SafeCell 360 (\$3, Android) can disable incoming and outgoing texts whenever you exceed 5 mph.

Texting behind the wheel makes you up to 23 times more likely to crash.



## What's the best way to remove water from my ears after swimming?

TOM, WILMINGTON, NC

We'll start with the worst ways: using a cotton swab or a blow-dryer. If you stick the swab in too deep, you could damage your eardrum. And if you shoot hot air in there, you might melt the wax and make it run into your ear canal, says Steven Rauch, M.D., a professor of otolaryngology at Harvard Medical School. No, this is a problem best solved with alcohol. Your tube-like canals are lined with delicate, oily skin that causes H<sub>2</sub>O to sit on top, similar to the way raindrops bead on a freshly waxed car. You need to

break the surface tension, and that's where the alcohol comes in. "It's far less prone to beading up, so the water will run right out," says Dr. Rauch. Your treatment plan: Soak a cotton ball in rubbing alcohol, lie down on your side, and squeeze the liquid into the affected ear. (You might need to massage the outside to help the alcohol drain into the canal.) Now sit up and tilt your head the other way so the water is able to drain out. No success? The water could be trapped behind wax buildup. Time to visit an otolaryngologist, who can clean it out. For a list of specialists practicing in your area, go to entnet.org and click on "Find an ENT."

## I'd like to list my house on a vacation rental website. How can I protect myself from slob and thieves?

DAN, WESTCHESTER, NY

While most people will treat your abode as their own, there *are* homewreckers out there. Be sure to use a listing site that verifies the identities of all potential guests, says Jasper Ribbers, the author of *Get Paid for Your Pad*. With Airbnb, for example, hosts can require guests to provide a government-issued photo ID that matches their social media profiles on Facebook or LinkedIn. And speaking of identity, protect your own. Keep any important documents locked away in a safe



COLIN FARRELL

# INTENSO

DOLCE & GABBANA





## ▶ AM I NORMAL?



### When I'm asked to make a donation to a charity, I just get annoyed.

MARK, LANSDALE, PA

We're going to assume you aren't Millionaire Mark from Lansdale. For people with real-world wealth, the annoyance usually arises from the public nature of the ask. "There's a lot of social pressure involved," says Stefano DellaVigna, Ph.D., a professor of economics and business administration at UC Berkeley. "Being put on the spot can be very uncomfortable." In a study he published in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, DellaVigna found that when people were given the chance to avoid interacting with a charity solicitor, as many as 25 percent took the out. And those who did give? They felt ambushed for alms and coerced into opening their wallets. So the next time you find yourself facing a guy with a bucket and a bell or a cashier asking you to add an extra dollar to your total, just remember your most recent charitable donations, smile, and feel free to decline. Don't worry: As the research shows, plenty of other folks will knuckle under and give to escape the guilt.

● NORMAL ○ WEIRD

place and have the post office hold your mail while you're gone, says Ribbers. The good news is that if you follow only these basic steps, you probably won't open your house to a criminal. The bad news is that you could still come home to a disaster. When prospective renters express interest, check to see how they've been rated by other owners. Zero feedback, or hints that they may have overstayed their welcome somewhere? Then don't hand over the keys. And most important of all, pore over your homeowner's policy to see whether your coverage extends to a rental scenario, says Ribbers. If it doesn't, or if you simply don't want to loop in your provider, spring for the optional vacation rental insurance offered by most listing sites, including HomeAway Assure offered by HomeAway and VRBO. It'll cost about the same as your current homeowner's policy. Or you could have your guests put down a refundable security deposit or purchase their own travel insurance. If they balk at your house rules, tell them to enjoy their stay in town—just not at your place.

### What the hell is tooth soap?

SCOTT, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

What the hell indeed. After all, we thought teeth cleaning had been pretty much figured out by now. *MH* dentistry advisor Mark Wolff, D.D.S., Ph.D., explains: "Some people are concerned about chemical exposure from

toothpaste," he says. "That's where tooth soap comes in." Whether in liquid or solid form, most tooth soaps contain coconut or castile oil and little else. You definitely won't find any sodium lauryl sulfate, the strong, potentially irritating detergent listed as an ingredient in most toothpastes. Nor will you see any trace of triclosan, an antibacterial agent that may contribute to bacterial resistance to antibiotics. And fluoride? Forget it. The mineral has long been accused of causing lower IQs among kids and increasing the risk of cancer. But hold on a sec, Dr. Wolff says: Studies have concluded that the evidence against fluoride is lacking. What the science *has* shown is that fluoride can lower the odds of developing gum disease and reduce tooth decay by nearly 35 percent among adults. If you're looking for a smile shiner that's both safe and effective, Dr. Wolff recommends sticking with formulas that contain fluoride. And baking soda, a natural ingredient, can take the place of triclosan for beating bad breath and plaque. Try Tom's of Maine Cavity Protection Toothpaste (\$4.50, Walgreens). It does have some sodium lauryl sulfate, but the amount is low enough that it shouldn't cause irritation in most mouths.

### My protein powder is past its expiration date. Is it still safe to use?

JACK, DENVER, CO

Are you worried about your bowels or your biceps? Protein powders don't spoil the way meat or dairy does, because a dry environment makes it nearly impossible for microbes to grow, says Bob Roberts, Ph.D., a professor of food

science at Penn State University. So unless you're storing your canisters in a warm, humid place (like the bathroom or your gym locker), you're fine on that front. As for the muscle-building mojo of protein powder, it does diminish after the use-by date has passed. You can blame a chemical reaction called Maillard browning: The protein reacts with sugar left over from when the whey was extracted from milk, resulting in a gradual breakdown of the amino acid lysine. "If you lose lysine, then the powder will not be as complete of a protein," says Roberts. Only a day or two past the expiration date? Put a bit of it on your tongue. Another telltale sign of Maillard browning is a fade in flavor, says Roberts. If you taste cardboard, toss it. And if it always tasted like cardboard, then no wonder the stuff sat around for so long. Maybe it's time to go shopping for a new brand, such as Isopure Zero Carb Creamy Vanilla powder (\$46, amazon.com). It contains 50 grams of protein per serving.

### I know the cutoff age for most guys to get the HPV vaccine is 21. I'm 34. Is there any point in getting it now?

JASON, AUSTIN, TX

Even if there were, good luck convincing your doc to give you the shot. Most sexually active men who are past the cutoff age have already been exposed to a mild strain of HPV (human papillomavirus) through direct skin-to-skin contact, says Michael Birrer, M.D., director of the Gillette Center for Gynecologic Oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital. That means by now you've already developed antibodies


## I stink up the house when I cook fish. What's the best way to clear the air?

TONY, BALTIMORE, MD

You need to take action before the salmon even hits the skillet. The muscle tissues in seafood are stocked with trimethylamine oxide (TMAO), an odorless organic compound that helps fish live in salt water, says Jung-lim Lee, Ph.D., an associate professor of food microbiology at Delaware State University. But once fish die and are exposed to oxygen, bacteria produce an enzyme that converts TMAO into trimethylamine (TMA), a process that produces the distinct stink. The longer a fish is out of water, the more TMA is released. So stop the stench by soaking or rubbing the fish in an acidic solution, such as vinegar or lemon juice, Lee says. This does two main things: It suppresses bacterial growth and causes the TMA to bind to water instead of stinking up the air. Let the fish sit for a few minutes, rinse it with water, then cook. Another option is to dunk the fish in dairy for a half hour before cooking. The caseins in milk attach to fish muscle, preventing TMA from evaporating. Both ways keep the fish fresh, not funky.







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BROOKS

Ask MH

## YOUR BODY, DISSECTED

by Adnan Nasir, M.D.



### Why does my beard grow in a different color than my hair?

JOE, NASHVILLE, TN

Your hormones are likely cuing the hue. An excess of dihydrotestosterone (DHT) has been implicated in androgenic alopecia, a.k.a. male-pattern baldness. The odd part: Too much DHT can also boost facial hair growth. These follicles are more active than the ones up top, so they also age more quickly. Toss in a surfeit of male sex hormones that can reduce your body's ability to pump out hair-darkening melanin, and salt-and-pepper scruff seems inevitable. Have a brown mop but a ginger beard? Your mug may be genetically wired to produce a high level of pheomelanin, a form of melanin that gives hair a rusty cast. Your options: Dye it, shave it, or go two-tone.

against HPV that can wipe out the infection naturally within two years, rendering the vaccine pretty much pointless, says Dr. Birrer. Of course, all that changes if you fall into one or both of these high-risk categories: people who don't use protection and have multiple sex partners, and men who have sex with men. For example, men who have sex with men are considered at increased risk for HPV and are 17 times as likely as their straight counterparts to develop anal cancer, which may be triggered by HPV, according to the CDC. Sound like you? Ask your doctor about going off-label to receive the vaccine. The only thing it'll hurt is your wallet, since the three doses of shots can set you back \$500 or more and probably won't be covered by your health insurance plan.

### How old should my son be before he goes out running with me?

MIKE, LEXINGTON, KY

Can the kid tie his own shoes? Then he's ready to run, says *MH* sports medicine advisor Jordan Metzl, M.D. In other words, 5 or 6 years old is a safe starting age, Dr. Metzl says. While you guys are bonding, your son will be building strength in his bones, tendons, and ligaments, which in turn should reduce his risk of future running injuries. Just keep the mileage per outing to a minimum for at least a few years: Your boy's bones won't reach

full strength until after he hits puberty, so tromping too far too soon could lead to repetitive-use injuries. For starting mileage, Dr. Metzl's general guideline is to limit your father-son runs to 2 to 3 miles until he turns 10. (That's probably the distance he'd cover while running around with his friends anyway.) Then bump it up to 6 miles until age 13. Just remember to let your son set the pace so he's not tripping over himself trying to keep up with you: Almost half of athletic running-related injuries in kids ages 6 to 11 come from stumbles, according to a study in the journal *Clinical Pediatrics*. By the time he hits high school, your only worry should be whether you're fast enough to run with him.

## SHE ASKS

### Why does my boyfriend seem so much more susceptible to catching colds than I am?

JESSICA, MADISON, WI

Despite its rep as the he-man hormone, testosterone can leave guys with wimpy infection protection. Consider a typical sickness scenario: Bug invades body, immune system responds by commanding the release of antibodies. That's how it works in women; in men, though, high T levels can intercept that command, crippling the counterattack, according to Stanford researchers. There's also a genetic angle to the gender difference. Lots of genes that mediate our immune response to viruses are encoded on the X chromosome, and women have two copies of the X chromosome. Because of that duplication, researchers theorize that women may have more copies of X-linked immune system genes than men do, says Sabra Klein, Ph.D., an associate professor of microbiology and immunology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. The downside for gals is that this sometimes results in an overactive immune response, which is part of the reason women make up about 80 percent of patients with autoimmune conditions. Now, your boyfriend can't do anything about his T or his DNA, but encourage him to take a break from working out when he starts to feel sick. Research shows that intense resistance exercise can increase testosterone levels as well as the production of inflammatory cells, which may further suppress a man's immune system.



Have a question? We've got answers! Ask at [MensHealth.com/experts](http://MensHealth.com/experts).



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Ghost 8



An aerial, high-angle view of the New York City skyline at dusk or night. The city is densely packed with skyscrapers, many of which are illuminated with warm lights. The Hudson River and East River are visible in the background, with some bridges and boats. The overall tone is dramatic and urban.

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## FAVORITE FOODS FOR FAT LOSS

Habits aren't all bad: **Sticking with one brand of food may help you curb overeating**, say U.K. scientists. After feeding pizza to study participants, they found that folks who typically varied their pizza brands and types were less likely to find the slices satisfying than those who tended to stay loyal to one. And the greater their dissatisfaction, the more junk they ate afterward. Your expectation of a food affects your enjoyment of it, the authors explain. If it's not what you expected, you might eat more.

Sane servings of  
the same-old may lead  
to a leaner you.



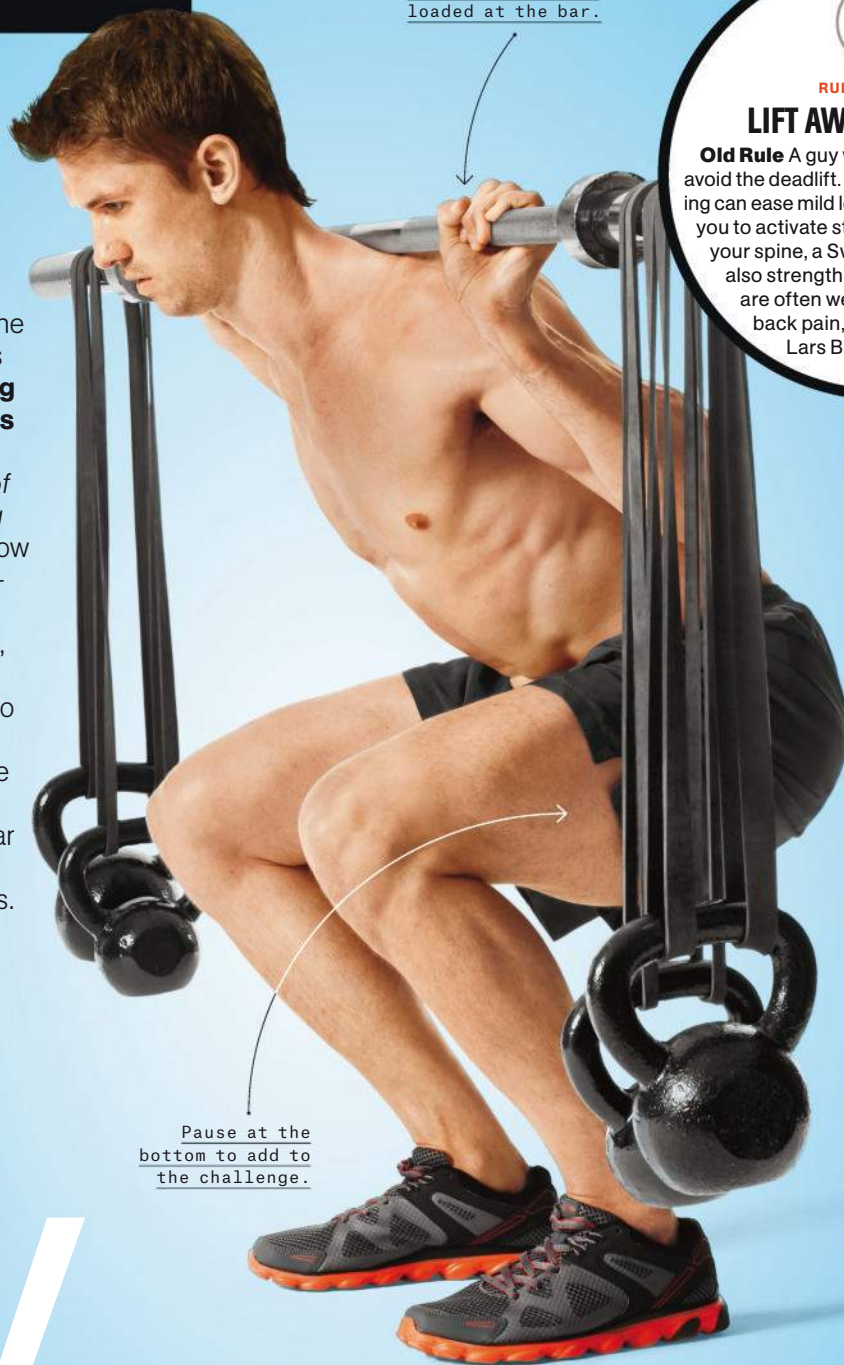
## Imbalance of Power

Next time you squat, skip the plates and hang kettlebells from the bar instead. **Lifting an unstable load engages more muscle throughout your body**, a *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* study reveals. How much more? The researchers found that activation in participants' quads, calves, and core rose 13, 72, and 86 percent, respectively. Do this: Grab kettlebells that total 50 to 60 percent of the weight you normally squat, and hang them from the bar with resistance bands, as shown. Do 5 sets of 15 reps. This technique also works for the bench press.

# 00%

MEASURABLE CHANGE IN PEOPLE'S STRENGTH WHEN THEY LIFTED WEIGHTS WHILE WEARING KINESIO TAPE

Source: *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*



A more effective way for you to get loaded at the bar.

Pause at the bottom to add to the challenge.



RULE REVERSAL

### LIFT AWAY BACK PAIN

**Old Rule** A guy with an achy back should avoid the deadlift. Period. **New Rule** Deadlifting can ease mild lower-back pain by teaching you to activate stabilizing muscles around your spine, a Swedish study reports. "It also strengthens your glutes, which are often weak in men who have back pain," says study author Lars Berglund, Ph.D.(c).



### MOVE LESS, GROW MORE

Stay still to bolster your core: **Isometric exercises may be the best way to train your core**, according to researchers at the University of Waterloo at Ontario. They found that exercises requiring you to hold a rigid position (like the ones below) boost core stability more than those that don't. "Isometric moves not only extend your core's time under tension but also reinforce its primary job: staying stiff to protect your spine and transfer energy between your limbs," says study author Stuart McGill, Ph.D.

### Hard-Core Triple Play

Each time you train, perform the following moves; they're what University of Waterloo biomechanics expert Stuart McGill, Ph.D., calls the "Big 3" of ab exercises. Do 5 sets of 5 reps per exercise, resting as needed between sets.



#### Plank

Assume a pushup position but support your weight on your forearms. Hold for 10 seconds. That's 1 rep. Rest briefly (2 or 3 seconds) between reps, lowering your hips to the floor.



#### Bird Dog

Get on your hands and knees and raise your left arm and right leg until they're in line with your body. Hold for 10 seconds. Repeat with your right arm and left leg to complete 1 rep.



#### Side Plank

Lie on your left side, your legs straight and upper body propped on your left forearm. Raise your hips. Now hold for 10 seconds and repeat on your right side. That's 1 rep.





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Hit the gym  
to avoid sucking  
wind outside.

## Hazed & Confused

Get your head out of the exhaust clouds. **Exposure to air pollution may affect the size of your brain**, a recent Harvard study suggests. The findings linked living in areas of poor air quality to smaller brain volume—the equivalent of about a year of brain aging. Study author Elissa Wilker, Sc.D., explains that tiny toxic particles can lodge in your lungs, causing widespread inflammation that may lead to cerebrovascular damage. To prevent premature graying of your gray matter, monitor your local air quality with the free EPA AIRNow app and avoid exercising outdoors when that index tops 100.



# 11

PERCENTAGE  
OF U.S. MEN  
WHO, IN  
ORDER TO  
SAVE MONEY,  
DON'T TAKE  
THEIR  
MEDS AS  
PRESCRIBED

Source: CDC



### WALK, OR DIE

Your company *still* hasn't sprung for standing desks? Stage a walkout. University

of Utah scientists report that **a quick stroll can help offset the deadly consequences of sitting all day**. People who walked an extra two minutes each hour lowered their risk of prema-

ture death by a third, compared with folks who spent most of their time planted in a seat. That's one work threat eliminated. For more ways to stay safe, see "6 Sneaky Office Assassins" in this issue.

DON'T TOUCH THAT!

### THE KITCHEN DISHCLOTH

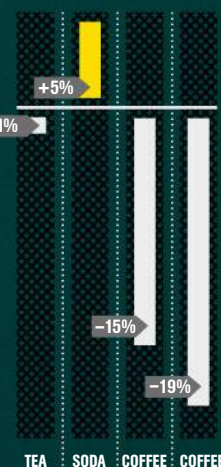
Bag the rag. When researchers at Kansas State had people prepare a meal containing raw meat and then make fruit salad, they found that the towels they used harbored more bacteria than the countertops, the sink faucet, and the trash can's handle. Study author Jeannie Sneed, Ph.D., R.D., says we tend to unconsciously touch the cloth with germ-y hands or use it to dry them after inadequate washing (less than 20 seconds of scrubbing). If you can't correct these microbial missteps, use paper towels.

GRIME  
SCENE

### Buy Johnson a Coffee

Fire up the auto-drip to avoid the bedroom droop. **Java can reduce your odds of ED**, a University of Texas study reveals. Men who downed the caffeine equivalent of two or three cups of joe a day had a 39 percent lower risk than guys who took in little or none. Caffeine relaxes penile arteries, boosting bloodflow, says study author David Lopez, Dr.P.H. While even one cup of coffee can help, a jolt from sugary soda may increase your ED risk.

Your risk of ED,  
based on your  
caffeinated drink  
of choice





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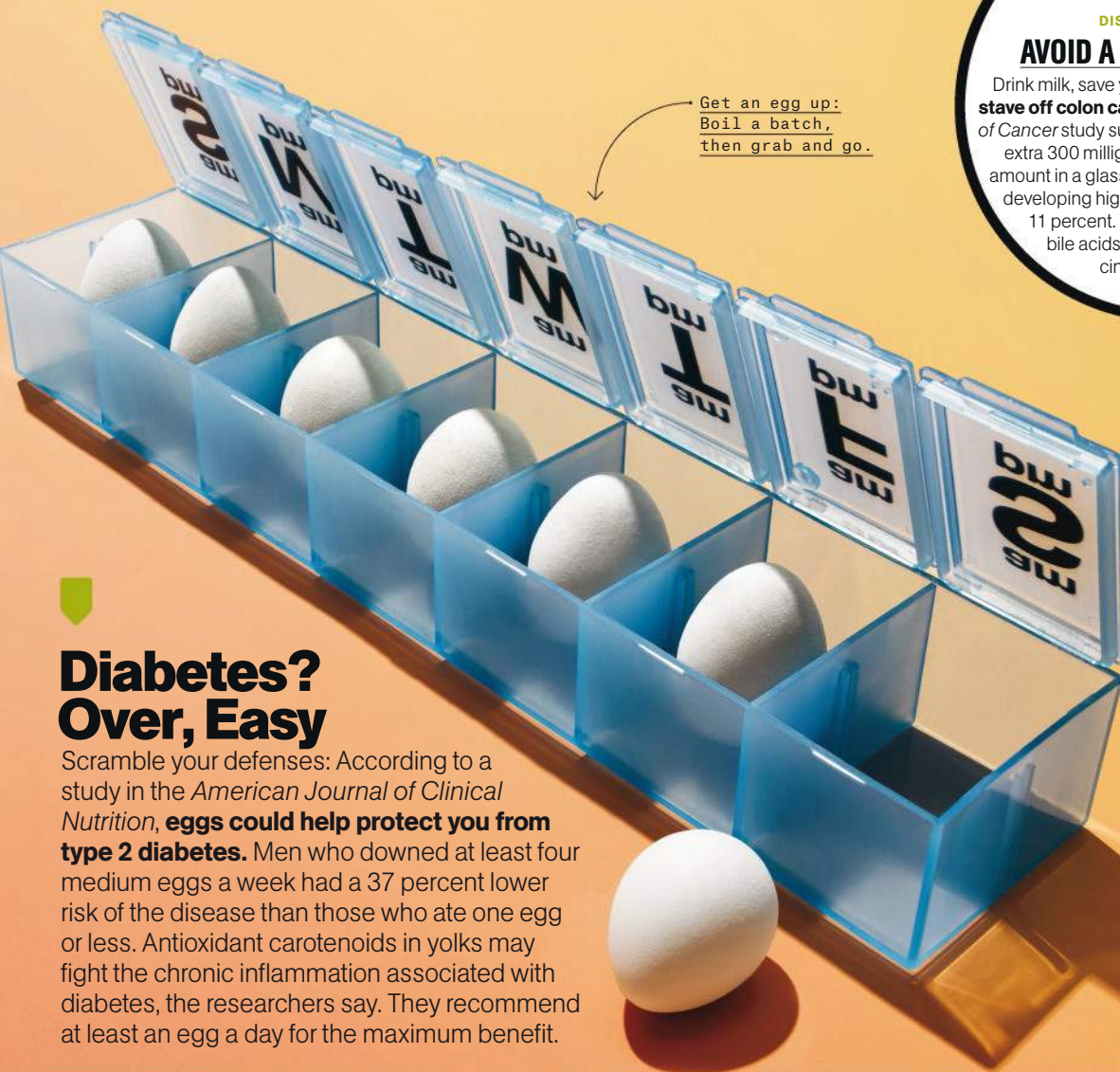


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## Diabetes? Over, Easy

Scramble your defenses: According to a study in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, **eggs could help protect you from type 2 diabetes**. Men who downed at least four medium eggs a week had a 37 percent lower risk of the disease than those who ate one egg or less. Antioxidant carotenoids in yolks may fight the chronic inflammation associated with diabetes, the researchers say. They recommend at least an egg a day for the maximum benefit.



DISEASE DEFENSE

## AVOID A BUM DIAGNOSIS

Drink milk, save your butt: **Calcium may help stave off colon cancer**, an *International Journal of Cancer* study suggests. People who took in an extra 300 milligrams of calcium a day—the amount in a glass of milk—cut their chances of developing high-risk colorectal growths by 11 percent. Calcium binds to excess bile acids, neutralizing their carcinogenic effects.



## FLAX OF LIFE

Feeling hypertense about hypertension? **Eat flaxseed to keep your blood pressure in check**, say scientists in Australia. People who ate 2 to 4 tablespoons of whole or ground flaxseed daily saw their systolic BP drop by 3.4 points, enough to cut their stroke risk by 10 percent. The alpha-linolenic acid in flax may reduce the amount of fatty acid byproducts in your blood, preventing the narrowing and blockage of arteries, the researchers say. Toss whole seeds on soups, salads, and cereals.

# 25

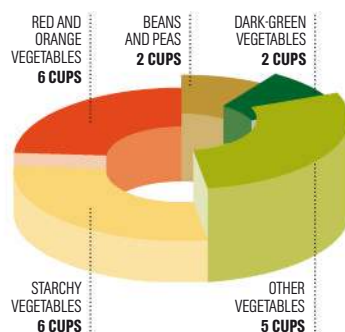
PERCENTAGE LESS FIBER  
FOUND IN FROZEN  
CARROTS THAN IN FRESH

Source: *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*

## Rake In the Roughage

Over 90 percent of American men don't meet federal guidelines for vegetable intake. Don't be that guy: Find delicious ways to hit the target (below) at [MensHealth.com/guylgourmet](http://MensHealth.com/guylgourmet).

TOTAL: 21 CUPS A WEEK\*



\*For a 180 lb man who averages 5 hours of activity a week

JEDI MIND TRICK

## SNACK FIRST THEN SHOP

Eat a healthy snack, like a piece of fruit, before you go grocery shopping. Doing so tricks you into buying 25 percent more fruits and vegetables than if you hadn't snacked.

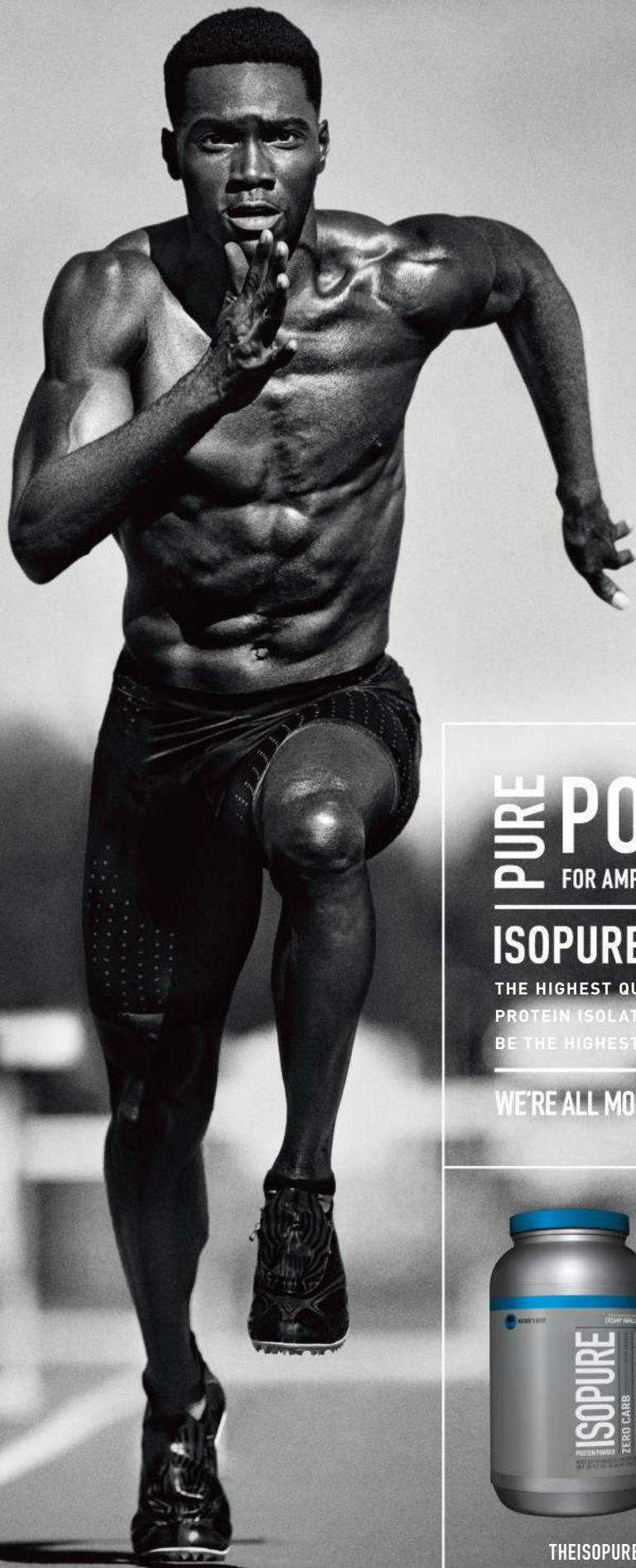
**How It Works** Healthy noshing before buying food primes your brain for the decisions you'll make inside the supermarket, according to researchers at Cornell University.



Prop styling: Megumi Emoto/Anderson Hopkins; Food/le/Getty Images (flaxseed), iStock (bag)



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Blessed be the  
ties that bind...  
her pretty  
wrists together.

## What's Knot to Like?

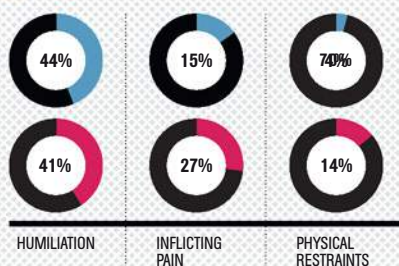
Can tying her down free her up? **Women who are into BDSM say it helps them worry less about staying aroused**, a new Portuguese study reveals. And removing that stress can lead to more satisfaction. Men also say kinky practices reduce their anxieties about staying hard and achieving orgasm. "BDSM broadens the ways you can have sex," says Richard Sprott, Ph.D., coauthor of *Sexual Outsiders*. "If one particular area feels uncomfortable or doesn't work very well, there are other ways."

## Humiliation: How It Works

Those nasty words trigger a rush of feel-good endorphins as your brain tries to ease your pain, says Sprott. (It has a hard time distinguishing between physical and emotional injury.) But go easy: Insult your partner in a way that's also erotic. For example, instead of body shaming, say something like "You're a dirty, dirty girl."

## Who's Into It More?

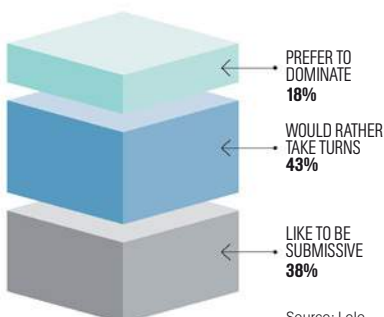
■ MEN ■ WOMEN



Source: *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* (Portuguese survey of 68 BDSM participants)

## The Power Equation

More people want to be dominated than dominate, but taking turns is most popular.



Source: Lelo

## What Kinky Women Do



Source: *Archives of Sexual Behavior*

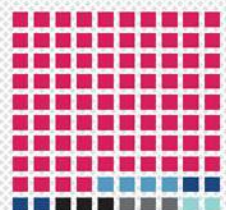
# 28

**AVERAGE AGE WHEN PEOPLE START TO DABBLE IN KINKY SEX**

Source: *The Journal of Sexual Medicine*

## Secret Places

Where does this stuff happen? Mostly at home.



Legend: ● HOME ● CAR ● HOTEL ● OTHER ● BDSM CLUB ● WORKPLACE

Photograph by DIANA SCHEUNEMANN



A man with short brown hair is sitting on a wooden bench in front of a large, multi-paned window. He is wearing a grey zip-up hoodie over a white t-shirt, red athletic shorts with grey side panels, and grey Skechers Sport sneakers with black laces and white soles. He is wearing large white over-ear headphones and holding a black smartphone in his hands. The background shows a view of a city and greenery through the window panes. The floor is made of concrete, and a brick wall is visible behind the bench.

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# Be the Greatest Hit on Karaoke Night

# Uncommon Knowledge



6  
"I WANNA BE  
SEDATED"  
THE RAMONES

A black and white portrait of Elvis Presley, looking slightly to the left with a serious expression. He has his signature pompadour hairstyle. The text "SU" is partially visible at the bottom right of the image.

9

**CROWD-PLEASING**

**LENGTH** **RANGE** **DIFFICULTY**

MAXIMUM SCORE: 20 (10 PER CATEGORY)

MAXIMUM

An epic performance will require great vocal range. If you're going for a high-octane (and high-octave) song, try to distract the crowd from your deficiencies. Well-timed air guitar moves are sure to keep folks entertained.



When shopping for your blender, make sure the base is compatible with a 16-ounce mason jar. Most blenders allow the lip of the jar to screw into the unit's base. So if you want to mix something lightly—salad dressing, say—you can toss the stuff into the jar, twist on the blender base (turn it upside down), and swirl.



## BUY Q

# A Blender That Crushes It

**Sure, that whirring, bladed gizmo** sitting on your counter is great for whipping up protein shakes. And if that's the beginning and end of what you want to pour out of the pitcher, that trusty old machine from your college days is probably adequate. If, on the other hand, you'd like to slice, churn, pulverize, and puree your way to smooth smoothies, frosty margaritas, and even almond butter, retire that relic. Follow our advice, and your new blender will revolutionize the way you eat. —MATT McCUE

## A

More power provides huge payoffs. Basic models start at about 300 watts. That's fine for milkshakes, but harder or denser ingredients will jam your unit, possibly burning up the motor, says *Top Chef* finalist Greg Gourdet, executive chef at Departure in Portland, Oregon. To make sure you have the torque to spin through anything, look for a unit in the 700- to 1,500-watt range. "It will get you a smoother product faster," he says.

## B

Any way you slice it, a blender is only as good as its blades. You want them to be set to at least two different heights so that no food will be missed, says Lisa McManus, executive editor of equipment testing at *America's Test Kitchen*. Now check the angles: The blade tips should reach within a quarter inch of the pitcher's wall. If the gap is too large, your ice or fruit will get stuck, leaving unblended pieces behind.

## C

Take a look at the pitcher from the side. Is it V-shaped or U-shaped? If there's too much taper, your ingredients won't have enough room to drop down to the blades, McManus says. Also, a too-narrow pitcher may trap pieces of food. As for construction, copolyester and polycarbonate are great; they're more shatterproof than glass. Now feel the interior for raised measuring lines; these can catch food, making the vessel hard to wash.

## D

Keep in mind, it's not a dumbbell. "It doesn't need to be heavier than 10 pounds," says Gourdet. The key: The base should flare out at least as wide as the top of the pitcher to counterbalance any wobbling as ingredients shift around. In terms of settings, any blender with low, medium, and high is fine, says McManus. Switch speeds as the mixture refines. Of course, you also want a "pulse" button for salsa; your creations will be nicely chunky.

**THREE PRODUCT OPTIONS** VITAMIX PROFESSIONAL SERIES 200, \$479; KITCHENAID 5-SPEED CLASSIC BLENDER, \$130; BREVILLE HEMISPHERE CONTROL, \$200

## BODY BENCHMARK

### Do You Have What It Takes to Be a Memory Master?

Nelson Dellis has won the USA Memory Championships four times since 2011, a feat that requires one hell of a ripped hippocampus. Want to enter the March 2016 competition? Better start brain training now. Memorizing massive sequences of names, numbers, and playing cards involves harnessing some pretty mind-numbingly complicated mnemonic devices. But you can learn the same tricks the pros use from Dellis's own tutorials at [climbformemory.com](http://climbformemory.com). Compare your scores to the averages shown below, which were set by the 2015 finalists in three popular categories. That's what you call an unforgettable feat. —LAUREN DEL TURCO

# 104

Number of name-to-photo matches recalled after 15 minutes of review

# 216

Number of digits on grid memorized in order after five minutes of review

# 1:24

Time (min:sec) to recall a full shuffled card deck, in order, after five minutes of review



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# Uncommon Knowledge

QUICK  
CLICK



"You're getting ready to head out and maybe meet some girls... the next thing you know, it's Sunday, and you're in the ER with no nuts."

—BRIAN STEIXNER, M.D., OF THE JERSEY UROLOGY GROUP, ON PUBIC TRIMS GONE BAD. DETAILS AT MENSHEALTH.COM/OUCH

## MONTHLY METRICS

### Women Whoop

**39%** of fans at a typical NFL game are women. So if you're planning to go shirtless with your belly covered in paint, you might want to start doing crunches now.

### Sex Saves

**14%** of U.S. men will get a prostate cancer diagnosis. Ask your partner to help lower your risk: Research shows that 21-plus orgasms a month will do exactly that.

### Cars Crawl

**11%** of us hit the road on Labor Day weekend. Before you leave, download Waze: This free app crowdsources traffic conditions to reroute you in real time.

### Bakers Balk

**73%** of Americans say apple pie isn't their favorite kind. How un-American! Show your kids that apples grow on trees, not in stores. Visit [pickyourown.org](http://pickyourown.org).

Sources: Sports Business Research Network, NCI, AAA, Business Wire

While you can't speed up time in the drive-thru line, you can make it feel as if it's passing faster by distracting yourself, says Teck-Hua Ho, Ph.D., a professor of marketing at UC Berkeley. Your best bet: Play a game. Try the Sky Burger app; it's free, and it's really the only way you can win with fast food.



## WHAT'S YOUR PLAY?

# There's a Line at the Fast-Food Drive-Thru

A lot of things can reduce a guy to buying fast food—cost, convenience, a craving for ridiculous amounts of fat and sodium. But none of that matters if it isn't also fast. Which is why pulling into a busy Burger King or a chock-full Chick-fil-A presents men with a dilemma: Take the drive-thru, or park and head inside?

The short answer: If you see three or more cars lined up for the window, it's probably better to go into the establishment, says Greg Bigwood, Ph.D., a computer scientist who has mapped the problem

at AetherWorks, a software firm in New York City. "The most convenient-looking option isn't necessarily the fastest," he explains. "If too many people are ahead of you at the drive-thru, you're screwed."

Bigwood's calculations are based on "queuing theory," which, for diners without Ph.D.'s, means identifying the path of least resistance. In an ideal fast-food world, where no one's in front of you inside the restaurant or at the drive-thru, the latter will be quicker; you don't have to park and walk inside.

But that changes in crowded conditions. It doesn't matter if three cars are waiting for the window—the worker can still help only one customer at a time. And you can never predict when someone in the car ahead will want to have it their way or pay with pennies. By contrast, the counter inside will often have at least three "paths" open.

The numbers Bigwood crunched suggest that when only one or two

cars are ahead of you, the wait will be about three minutes to get that greasy bag in your greedy hands. That's roughly 30 seconds faster than the time it would take to duck in and out. If the line ahead is three to five deep, you'll be faced with about six minutes. Staring at six sets of brake lights? That's eight minutes in traffic before you'll get your grub.

There is, however, one instance when this theory should be tossed out the drive-thru window: if there's just one vehicle in front of you—and it's a loaded minivan. —SHARA TONN

## CLOCKING THE RESTAURANTS

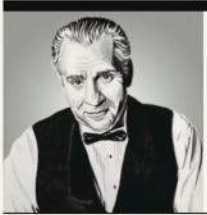
Here's how drive-thru times vary by chain, according to the industry publication QSR.

WENDY'S	134 SECONDS
TACO BELL	158 SECONDS
MCDONALD'S	189 SECONDS
BURGER KING	198 SECONDS
CHICK-FIL-A	204 SECONDS

From top: BlueSky/Image/Shutterstock, Tim Manton/Masterfile, Medablit/Imagoe/Fotolia, Masterfile, Laura Johansen/Getty Images



You can hit on her,  
but we predict  
an incomplete pass.



GUY WISDOM

## Jimmy the Bartender

Straight-up advice on women, work, and other stuff that screws up men's lives.

**My superhot colleague has been flirting with me. It'd be a slam dunk! But I don't want to ruin the good thing I have with my girlfriend.**

LARRY, TUCSON, AZ

You kidding me here? If you're looking for permission to test the waters, it won't come from me. I've been tempted too, pal. Yeah, ladies flirt with the barkeep, even a codger like me. But I've never taken the bait, because I, like you, have a good thing at home. You want to keep yours? Then don't be a lowlife. Shut down the flirting and consider it one of many worthwhile sacrifices you'll make for the woman you love—not the one you lust after.

**I need a cocktail I can make at home that will impress the hell out of a woman I just met. What've you got?**

CARL, BOSTON, MA

Here, take this corkscrew and practice. Nine times out of 10, a nice bottle of wine does the trick. Trust me on this: No woman wants to watch you fumbling with a jigger and a Boston

shaker on a first date. If you must mix something, try a simple margarita: a shot of tequila, half a shot of orange liqueur (Cointreau, say), and the juice of a lime. Three ingredients, and it's way better than what those machines spit out in some bars. Skip the salt. And Carl? Don't get all fussy about it. Try to look like you've done this before.

**My buddy got a really hideous tattoo. I guess I didn't react the way he'd hoped. What was I supposed to say?**

BERNARD, SAN DIEGO, CA

You ever had a girlfriend, Bernard? Then you should know that if someone asks you, "How does this look on me?" you say, "Great!" Doesn't matter if it's a pair of jeans, a haircut, a feather boa, or a tattoo. Unfortunately, you've already blown it with your pal. He knows you're not a big fan of the ink. So just wait until the next time it's exposed and say, "You know, that tattoo is really starting to grow on me." Say it like you mean it—practice in the mirror if you have to. Sure, it's a lie. But it's a lie you need to tell.

**My boss says the company is hurting too bad to give raises, but I happen to know that some people were taken care of. Should I make a thing of it?**

SEAN, ROCHESTER, NY

And accomplish what? Pissing off the boss? The fact that the head cheese isn't a straight shooter ain't the problem here, Sean. It's that your name wasn't front and center when they divided up the pie. Go and ask outright what you can do to make it rain next year. If the boss doesn't come up with any useful guidance, then maybe it's time to start shopping for a new boss.

**My dad hasn't really opened up about Mom's death. You'd think he'd want to, right?**

LOUIS, SAN ANTONIO, TX

My condolences. I remember when my grandma died. My dad, her oldest, hardly said a word, not even at her funeral. Years passed before he started talking about her, and even then it was only once in a while. Your dad sounds a lot like mine. I'm sure he'll process his grief quietly and in his own time, so just let him. Your job isn't to play brain surgeon and crack him open. He might talk...and he might not. Just check in on him often. That's how you show him he helped your mother raise a good son. You can talk about her, though. Maybe it's time to set an example for him.

**This couple was fighting in a parking lot. He was screaming at her, and it looked like it could turn violent. Should I have stepped in?**

ANDREW, FT. LAUDERDALE, FL

I've seen that kind of ugliness more often than I care to admit. In my bar, I can just throw guys out. But in a parking lot you have no jurisdiction, and bumping chests with a belligerent hothead is bound to end badly for both of you. I hate to say this, but you can't do much aside from staring at him and hoping he simmers down. If the shenanigans continue, don't hesitate: Dial 911. Better yet, let him hear you calling the cops. Sure, you're just one guy—but now you've got major backup on the way.

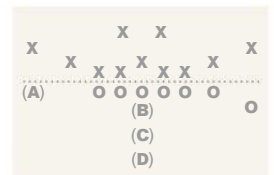


MAN SCORE

## CAN YOU ACE THE NFL S.A.T.?

The NFL season kicks off this month. So offer this armchair-quarterback quiz to your pals. Then make it a point to catch the next game together. Bonding over sports combats loneliness and improves self-esteem, says Daniel Wann, Ph.D., a professor of psychology who studies sports fandom at Murray State University. —TONY DORMANN

**1/ Your offense is lined up in a basic "I" formation. Identify positions A, B, C, and D.**



A) \_\_\_\_\_ C) \_\_\_\_\_  
B) \_\_\_\_\_ D) \_\_\_\_\_

**2/ Match the nickname to the NFL franchise.**

A) 12TH MAN	1) KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
B) 4TH PHASE	2) NEW ORLEANS SAINTS
C) WHO DAT NATION	3) SEATTLE SEAHAWKS
D) SEA OF RED	4) CHICAGO BEARS

**3/ Your team is on offense. Which plays are legal?**

THE TRAP	Y/N
THE SWEEP	Y/N
THE FORWARD LATERAL	Y/N
THE BOOTLEG	Y/N

**Answers:** 1. A: wide receiver, B: QB, C: fullback, D: running back  
2. A: 3, B: 4, C: 2, D: 1  
3. Y, Y, N, Y





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catapult himself to  
victory: [MensHealth.com/toptrainer](http://MensHealth.com/toptrainer).



#### Training Guide

# Meet Your New Sweat Sergeant

Build your own boot camp and win the war on fat with the 2015 *Men's Health* Next Top Trainer's 4-step plan. BY TREVOR THIEME, C.S.C.S.



FOR THE SECOND YEAR, *MEN'S HEALTH* LAUNCHED A SEARCH for the nation's most skilled and inspiring trainer. After an initial round of auditions, eight were chosen to compete head-to-head in contests of training know-how. And when the sweat dried, one man was standing: Gideon Akande.

If you live in Chicago, you might know him. The two-time Chicago Golden Gloves champ runs the city's toughest boot camps, military-style fitness classes focusing on grueling total-body circuits. Not in Chicago? Turn the page to build your own, or visit [MensHealth.com/gideon](http://MensHealth.com/gideon) to sweat with Akande.



**Gideon Akande, 31**

**HEIGHT** 5'10" **WEIGHT** 185

**HOMETOWN** Chicago

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS**

2015 *Men's Health* Next Top Trainer winner, 2013 and 2014 Chicago Golden Gloves champion

**FITNESS PHILOSOPHY**

Set big goals and achieve them with small, attainable steps

**FAVORITE TIP**

Never sacrifice form for speed. Good technique will take you farther.



**STEP 1/  
Find a Place to Sweat**

Akande prefers to conduct boot camps outdoors. "Parking lots, city parks, and basketball courts all provide plenty of space to move around, which you'll need if friends join you or if you do moves like lateral shuffles," says Akande. Prefer to sweat indoors? "Pick exercises that allow you to stay in one spot," he says. "Instead of a lateral shuffle, for example, do high knees."



**STEP 2/  
Select Your Exercises**

Plug body-weight moves you already know into the following categories: **UPPER BODY** (pushup, chinup, pullup) **CORE** (plank, V-up) **LEGS** (lunge, squat) **TOTAL-BODY CARDIO** (high knees, lateral shuffle) "Doing moves in that order as a circuit lets one muscle group recover while another works," says Akande. "That helps you keep the rests brief and the intensity high."



**STEP 3/  
Choose Your Interval**

Your interval is your work-to-rest ratio (in seconds) for each exercise. Select one of these three: **30:30** If you've never done a boot camp before, start with this balance of effort and recovery. **40:20** A great choice for an intense muscle burn. **20:10** If you're fit and want a lung-busting workout, this is your jam. Which-ever interval you pick, go extra hard in the final circuit, says Akande.



**STEP 4/  
Warm Up and Go**

Before you begin, warm up with these body-weight moves: plank (45 seconds), squat (30 reps), and bear crawl (30 seconds). That's 1 round. Do 2 or 3; then jump into your boot camp. Do the circuit you created in step 2 four to eight times, resting between circuits as needed to complete the workout. "Grab some friends if you can," says Akande. "Boot camps work best with a group."



**WORTH IT OR WORTHLESS?**

**COMPRESSION SLEEVES**

When compression garments first appeared 50 years ago, they were considered medical devices. Doctors prescribed them to enhance blood-flow in patients with poor circulation, not to boost performance in athletes with multimillion-dollar throwing arms. But today you can't go to an NBA, MLB, or NFL game without seeing skin-tight arm and calf sleeves. Athletes claim the sleeves keep their arms and lower legs warm, primed, and injury-free. But scientists are unsure of the benefits for regular guys. Researchers in Spain, for example, found that the sleeves can reduce soreness by 27 percent, but only in the muscles they cover. So if your biceps or calves don't ache, forget about them. And don't believe claims they boost lifting power. "The effect is small—about 1 percent," says iFAST founder Bill Hartman.

**Verdict:** Worth it if you want to prevent soreness in your arms and legs. Otherwise, worthless.



**ON OUR RADAR: TART CHERRY JUICE**

Taken between workouts, it can accelerate recovery, say U.K. researchers. Our pick: Isopure Aminos Alpine Punch, which includes tart cherry extract and packs 5g BCAAs. [isopure.com](http://isopure.com)



# Men's Health URBANATHLON

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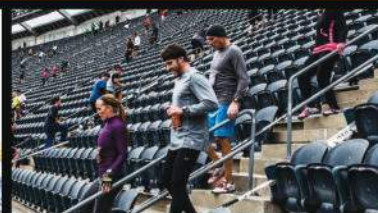
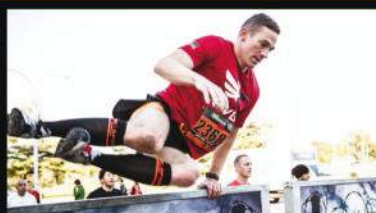
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— DEAN KARNAZES,  
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# Your Pushup Power Plan

Transform a classic exercise into a total-body muscle builder with this complete guide to the most important move for men.

BY BEN COURT

1

## Use the Pushup to Test Your Strength and Power

Performing 50 pushups in a minute is a classic fitness benchmark. “But you rarely see guys do even 1 rep with perfect form,” says Rob Shaul, C.S.C.S., founder of the training facility Strong Swift Durable. “So whenever a guy tells me he can do 50 in a minute, I tell him to do it with

the dead-stop pushup, where you lower yourself to the ground and lift your hands.” That pause eliminates help from the stretch reflex—the tendency of a muscle to spring back to a shortened state when stretched—and forces you to move through a full range of motion. The result? No cheating. “It’s a true test of strength,” says Shaul. Read on to test yours, and then follow Shaul’s plan to increase it.

## Dead-Stop Pushup Test

Assume a pushup position with your feet together, your body straight, and your hands below but slightly wider than your shoulders, as shown above. Lower your body to the floor. Lift your hands off the floor, pause, and then place them back on the floor and push up explosively. Do as many as you can in 60 seconds. Twenty is average; 30 is exceptional.

## Boost Your Strength

Add the dead-stop pushup to three of your weekly workouts. Do 5 sets, using the chart below to guide your reps. Retest yourself after 4 weeks. Repeat the 4-week cycle until you reach your goal: 30 perfect reps.

<b>WEEK 1</b>	40% OF YOUR TEST NUMBER
<b>WEEK 2</b>	40% OF YOUR TEST NUMBER
<b>WEEK 3</b>	50% OF YOUR TEST NUMBER
<b>WEEK 4</b>	60% OF YOUR TEST NUMBER

If your hips sag, consider that rep your last and end the set.

## SQUEEZE

Clenching your glutes locks your hips in place, keeping your body straight from head to heels. It also takes stress off your lower back.

## PRESS

Holding your feet together adds muscle tension in your legs, enhancing energy transfer and power production throughout your body.

## PYRAMID PUSHUPS



**1/ Single-Leg** Perform a pushup, but elevate one leg instead of keeping both feet on the floor.



**2/ Dive Bomb** Start with your hips up; then pull your body forward, lower your hips, and straighten your arms.



**3/ Knee-to-Chest** As you press up, bring a knee toward your chest. Alternate knees with each rep.



**4/ Clapping** Do a pushup, but press up with enough force to launch off the floor and clap.





#### BRACE

Increasing core tension boosts stability all over. Imagine someone is about to punch you in the gut.

#### STRAIGHTEN

Keeping your arms straight so your hands align with your shoulders reduces stress on those critical joints.

#### TWIST

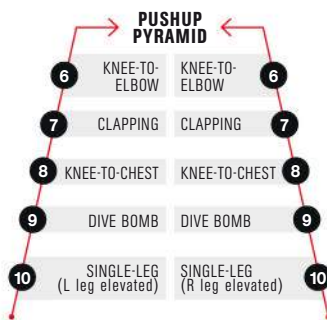
Driving your palms down and screwing them outward into the floor increases stability through your shoulders, neck, and upper back. Stability equals power.

## 2

### Transform the Pushup into a Total-Body Workout

If you see the pushup as only an exercise, you're not realizing its full potential. "By combining different variations, you create a workout you can do anywhere," says Martin Rooney, C.S.C.S., founder of Training for Warriors. See for yourself with his pushup pyramid.

**DIRECTIONS** Start at the base of the pyramid on the bottom left. As you work your way up one side and down the other, perform the number of reps indicated in the black circle for each exercise. (See the descriptions below.) Rest as needed according to your fitness level. **BEGINNER/** Between each exercise. **INTERMEDIATE/** At the top (between sets of knee-to-elbow pushups). **ADVANCED/** At the end. Repeat.



### THE SINGLE-ARM PUSHUP CHALLENGE

Blame Rocky Balboa for making the single-arm pushup the benchmark that separates chumps from champs in the gym. "It's a high-skill, high-strength pinnacle exercise," says Mike Fitch, C.S.C.S., of Global Bodyweight Training. "The move ensures that both of your arms are equally strong, and activates your core more than a standard pushup does, forcing it to work harder to stabilize your body."

**CONQUER IT** Twice a week, do the exercises in the single-arm pushup progression below as a circuit, moving from one to the next with 60 seconds of rest after each move. Do 3 circuits. Each week, do the elevated single-arm pushup slightly lower (so you might progress from a high box to a bench to an aerobic step) until you can do 5 reps on the floor with perfect form.

### SINGLE-ARM PUSHUP PROGRESSION



**5/ Knee-to-Elbow** Do a pushup, but touch your knee to your elbow at the bottom. Alternate sides each rep.



**1/ Elevated Single-Arm** Spread your feet. Put one hand on a bar or tall box. Do 1 to 5 reps, switch arms, repeat.



**2/ Skydive** Lift your left leg. Put your left palm, right fingers, and right knee on the floor. Do 5 reps, switch sides, repeat.



**3/ Archer** Move one hand farther out to the side than the other. Do 10 reps, switch arms, repeat.



# Feel the Burn with 10-Pound Dumbbells

Build more muscle by lifting less.

BY TREVOR THIEME, c.s.c.s.

**THE LAST TIME YOU TOUCHED** 10-pound dumbbells was probably while searching for shoes under your wife's side of the bed. After all, light weights are for women and injury rehab, right? Serena says: "Wrong, dumbass!" Working both ends of the dumbbell rack hits a broader spectrum of muscle fibers and challenges your muscles in ways that using heavier weights alone can't. "You'll increase your strength, power, and mobility," says *MH* fitness director BJ Gaddour. Weave these 10 exercises into your workouts to see for yourself.



## 1/ Increase Mobility

### OVERHEAD SQUAT

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and hold a pair of dumbbells above your shoulders, palms forward. Lower your body until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Drive through your heels to return to the starting position. Do 5 sets of 10 reps.



## 2/ Enhance Balance

### CRAB TO TOE TOUCH

Assume a crab-walk position, holding a dumbbell in your left hand in front of your shoulder. Raise your right leg and reach for your toes with the dumbbell. Return to the starting position. Do 10 reps, switch arms and legs, and repeat. That's 1 set; do 3.

Prop styling: Sarah Guido/Halley Resources



# ARE YOU DRIVEN BY PERFORMANCE? PROVE IT.

**Men's Health** and **Under Armour** have teamed up to create the first-ever fitness challenge driven by the sporty soul of the all-new **2016 BMW X1**. It's the **BMW X1 Ultimate Fitness Xperience Challenge**, a performance-based challenge you can track with the free MapMyFitness app!

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### 3/ Accelerate Recovery

#### TURKISH GETUP

Lie on your back with your right leg bent and left arm by your side; hold a dumbbell in your right hand above your chest. Roll onto your left side and prop yourself on your left forearm. Straighten your left arm, raise your hips, and push into a half-kneeling position, threading your left leg behind your right. Stand up. Reverse the move to return to the starting position. Switch sides and repeat. Do 100 reps (50 per side) on days you don't hit the gym.

Keep your head up and don't take your eyes off the dumbbell as you do the move.



### 4/ Build Explosiveness

#### DUMBBELL DISCUS

With a dumbbell in your right hand, stand with your feet slightly beyond shoulder width. Turn right by pivoting on your left foot; bend your knees and lower your body as you reach back with your right arm and down with your left. (Imagine you're winding up to hurl a discus.) Pivot left, swinging your right arm up and left arm back. Repeat for 20 seconds; rest 10 seconds. Switch hands and repeat in the other direction. Continue 4 minutes.



### 5/ Gain Speed

#### ROTATIONAL PUNCHES

Stand tall with your feet slightly beyond shoulder-width apart. Hold a dumbbell in each hand in front of your ribs, palms facing each other. Twist your torso to the left by pivoting on your right foot, and punch straight out from your shoulder with the dumbbell in your right hand. Now pivot right, punching explosively with the dumbbell in your left hand. Continue alternating sides for 30 seconds; then rest for 30 seconds. Do this 5 times total.



### 6/ Boost Metabolism

#### SEESAW ROW

Stand holding a pair of dumbbells at arm's length next to your sides. Take a step forward with your left foot, bend your knees, and hinge forward slightly. Row the dumbbell in your right hand to your right side, and then lower it as you row the weight in your left hand to your left side. Continue alternating sides as fast as you can for 20 seconds, and then rest for 10 seconds. Switch legs and repeat. Continue for 4 minutes.



### 7/ Develop Stamina

#### PUSHUP-POSITION CURL

Grab a pair of dumbbells and assume a pushup position with your palms facing each other. Spread your feet slightly. Your body should form a straight line from your head to your ankles. Now lift the dumbbell in your right hand off the floor slightly, and curl it toward your right shoulder. (Try not to move your upper arm.) Lower it, and repeat with your left arm. Continue alternating right and left curls for 30 to 60 seconds.



## 8/ Torch Fat

### SPLIT-SQUAT SHOULDER RAISE

Hold a pair of dumbbells by your sides, palms in, and assume a staggered stance, left foot forward. Lower your body until your left thigh is parallel to the floor. Pause, and push back up as you raise the dumbbells out to your sides. Lower them as you drop back into a split squat. Repeat for 5 minutes, resting as needed. Switch legs every 5 reps.

Lift the weights to shoulder level and keep your torso upright for the entire move.

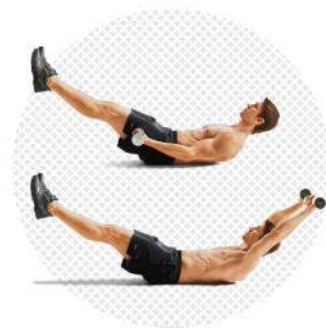
Your back knee should come close to the floor without actually making contact.



## 9/ Increase Strength

### DUMBBELL PISTOL SQUAT

Hold a pair of dumbbells by your sides and raise your left foot off the floor. Keeping your leg raised, lower your body into a squat, lifting the dumbbells in front of you. Return to the starting position. If that's too hard, squat onto a bench. Do 3 sets of 10 reps.



## 10/ Build Stability

### SIX-PACK SWEEPER

Lie on your back with your feet together and a dumbbell in each hand next to your thighs, palms up. Raise your legs and upper body off the floor. Sweep your arms above your head in an arc, and then back to your sides. That's 1 rep; do 3 sets of 10 to 20 reps.



## INSIDER TRAINING

By David Jack

### I'm starting to notice love handles. What's the quickest way to lose them?

KEVIN, NASHVILLE, TN

The first step is always the hardest: Cut back on your calorie intake. Start with refined-flour foods, cookies, packaged snacks, sugar-sweetened sodas, and other quick-digesting "high glycemic" choices that are easy to over-consume passively. Also amp up your lean

protein intake to help control hunger and maintain lean body mass as you shed body fat. As for workouts, combine longer, less-intense cardio, such as jogging, hiking, or cycling (45 to 60 minutes twice a week) with tougher interval and strength training (3 days a week) for 6 to 8 weeks. That mix will help you burn through fat stores, including the ones above your hips.

### How serious is feeling pain directly below my knee?

ROGER, PHOENIX, AZ

Consult your doctor, but it sounds as if you have an inflammatory condition called patellar tendinitis, also known as jumper's knee. If you play basketball or soccer, that's probably the cause, so warm the bench for a week or two until the pain goes away. If you're a lifter, lay off jumping, lunging,

and squatting for a month. During that time, strengthen your hamstrings (3 sets of 15 single-leg deadlifts and hamstring curls twice a week should do the trick), and foam-roll your quads and hip flexors for 5 minutes a day. When you start to do squats and lunges again, lower your hips below your knees; having them higher stresses the joints and connective tissue.



David Jack is a Men's Health fitness advisor and the owner of ActivLab in Phoenix. Follow him on Twitter: @davidjack1



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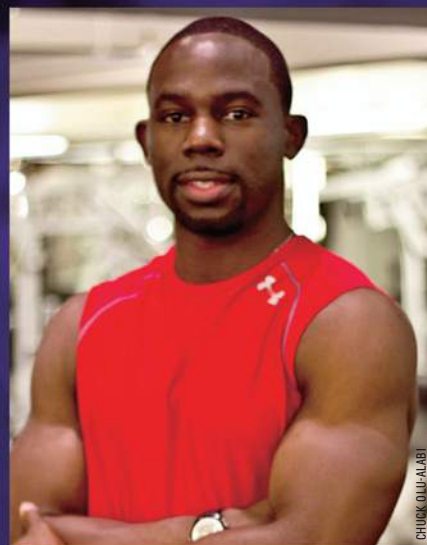
~ Adam Campbell,  
Editor of MensHealth.com

"From the moment we met Gideon on set, it was clear he was born to do it. Now he has the platform to prove it and I have no doubt that he will."

~ BJ Gaddour,  
Men's Health Fitness Director

"There's an energy about Gideon that's contagious. That energy combined with his passion to use fitness to change lives made him the natural choice."

~ David Jack - Activator,  
Men's Health Advisor



CHUCK OLU-ALABI

### WHAT'S NEXT FOR GIDEON:

Gideon will star in his own upcoming Men's Health fitness DVD, and will be a contributor to the brand for the next year!

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Guy Gourmet

# Say Goodbye to Average Joes

Prepare your palate for the best sloppy joe you've ever tasted. Then eat seconds off the table, your hands, the floor... BY LILA BATTIS



**HEARTY, HANDHELD, AND LOADED WITH PROTEIN, THE** sloppy joe should be one of the greatest culinary creations in all of American history. It's too bad the typical home cook doesn't treat it as such. When the prep work starts with a can opener, the final product tends to look like something you'd plop into Fido's dog bowl and taste like the BPA-lined can it came in. So we enlisted Francis Derby, executive chef of The Cannibal in New York City, to help us craft a joe that includes rich, meaty beef short ribs, plus ketchup, Coca-Cola, and beer. First step: Buy more napkins.





1

### Befriend a Butcher

Ground beef is fine. But beef short ribs are better, says Derby. “They add a texture that offsets the softness of the bun—almost like pulled pork.” Start with 2½ pounds of bone-in short ribs, enough for about 14 joes. And remember: Marbled meat provides maximum flavor.

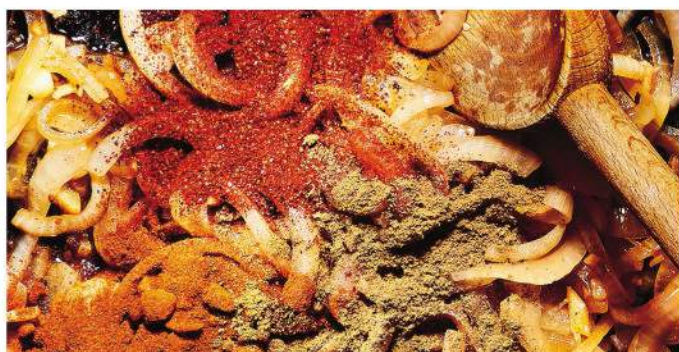
2

### Sizzle the Meat

Season the beef with salt and pepper. In a Dutch oven or large, heavy-bottomed pot, heat 1 Tbsp vegetable oil on medium high. When the oil is hot, add the beef, working in batches if necessary, and brown on all sides, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Transfer the seared meat to a paper-towel-lined plate. Preheat the oven to 325°F.

#### QUICK TIP: PICK UP ALL THE PIECES

Before adding the spices, scrape up the bits of browned meat sticking to the pot. They’ll add deep, savory flavor to the joes.



3

### Lay a Flavor Foundation

Think of sloppy joes as chili: They should be earthy but also bright and spicy—not palate-scorching. For the best flavor, you’ll need

heat, sweet, spice, and smoke. So in the vessel you used to cook the beef, add 2 thinly sliced medium Spanish onions and 5 minced garlic cloves. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions are translucent, 3 to 5 minutes. Add 1½ Tbsp smoked paprika, 1½ tsp chili powder, and ½ tsp each of cumin and coriander. Cook, stirring, until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add 1 cup of tomato paste and stir until slightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes.



#### SUPERIOR SIDE: STIR UP A SLAW

As the meat cooks, whip up some coleslaw. Combine 1 head shredded cabbage, 1 cup mayo, 1/2 cup whole grain mustard, 2 Tbsp Dijon, 1 1/2 Tbsp cider vinegar, and 1 Tbsp each of sugar, salt, pepper, and celery seed; toss. Let the slaw rest 30 minutes. *Makes 9 cups*

# 4

## Leverage Liquid

Slow, moist heat helps break down connective tissues, resulting in supremely tender beef. And a tangy base infuses the ribs with even more flavor. Add the following to the pot: 1/2 cup Coca-Cola (for sweetness), 1/2 cup brown ale (for nutty bitterness), 1/2 cup ketchup (for tanginess and a hint of acidity), and 1/4 cup soy sauce (for that salty, savory quality). Cook till thickened, 3 to 4 minutes, and then add the beef back to the pot, followed by 2 cups of chicken stock. Bring the mixture to a simmer, put a lid on the pot, and transfer it all to the oven. Cook until the meat falls off the bone, about 3 hours.



# 5

## Start Shredding

Using tongs, transfer your short ribs to a cutting board. Shred the meat with two forks and throw away the bones. Then skim and discard any fat from the cooking liquid. Add the meat back to the pot and simmer until the mixture thickens, about 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

# 6

## Serve the Slop

Derby's sloppy joe buns of choice are Martin's potato rolls. For extra chew, toast the buns open-faced on a sheet pan under a broiler for about a minute, or until golden brown. Then scoop 1/2 cup of the meat mixture onto each bun. Serve with coleslaw. And hey, grab yourself a beer. You deserve one.



## THE MH FAST FOODIE™

THESE FOUR SPEEDY SALADS WILL HELP YOU LOAD UP ON VEGETABLES.

**Caprese with Balls** In a small bowl, combine a pint of cherry tomatoes with a handful of fresh mozzarella pearls and thinly sliced basil leaves. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Season with smoked sea salt and freshly ground pepper. Serve with grilled chicken or steak.

**Salty-Sweet Citrus Salad** Thinly slice an orange and a small fennel bulb. Alternate the slices on a serving plate and throw on two handfuls of chopped green olives and some finely chopped red onion. Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Top with fennel fronds, if you want to be fancy.

**Cool Cukes** Cut a peeled cucumber into coins; toss them with a thinly sliced sweet onion, a handful of chopped dill, and a splash of white wine vinegar. Add sour cream, salt, and pepper. Eat it as is, or if you have a little extra time, chill the salad and serve it cold.

**Jicama Mango Salad** Peel a big, semiripe mango and a small jicama bulb; cut them into matchsticks. Mix them with the juice of half a lime, a blast of ground cayenne, and salt and pepper. Garnish with cilantro and chopped peanuts. Try the salad on grilled fish or shrimp. It'll even work with tacos.

Salty-Sweet Citrus Salad







## Nutrition Manual

## The Verdict on Saturated Fat

Evidence of links between heart disease and fat was full of holes. So unlock your lust for cheese and eggs. (Carbs: Still scary!)

BY K. ALEISHA FETTERS



### Get to Know Bacon and Butter Better

Fat gives beef, eggs, and cheese their luscious texture and flavor. Like all fats, the saturated kind contains 9 calories per gram. But unlike unsaturated, these fats also contain tightly packed (or “saturated”) carbon chains, which help them retain their structure at room temp. That’s why sat fat-rich butter sits solid on the counter while olive oil, which is high in monounsaturated fat, does not.



### Identify the Real Troublemakers

Saturated fat has a long history of being linked to heart disease. “Most of the data that is used to convict saturated fat is actually associated with excess calories from high-carb diets,” says Donald Layman, Ph.D., a professor emeritus of human nutrition at the University of Illinois. “Replacing carbohydrates in your diet with saturated fat usually reduces blood pressure and cholesterol.”



### Repeat: “The Lard Is My Savior...”

Look for grass-fed organic beef, pasture-raised chicken, and free-range eggs. Grass-fed beef contains higher levels of heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids than the grain-fed variety, according to Texas A&M University research. And eggs from pasture-raised chickens pack more omega-3s than those from their cooped-up counterparts, according to nutritional analysis from Penn State.



## CHAIN REACTIONS

THREE TYPES OF FATTY ACIDS, AND HOW YOUR BODY EMPLOYS TWO TO MAKE YOU AWESOME.

### SHORT-CHAIN

These fatty acids provide energy for digestion and may protect colon cells from inflammation, according to a 2014 *Advances in Immunology* study. Your body produces them when fiber ferments in your colon, which sounds disgusting. The good news: Dairy is another rich source. So shop the coolers for milk, butter, yogurt, and cheese.

### MEDIUM-CHAIN

When you consume medium-chain fatty acids, your body sends them to your liver for processing. There they produce compounds called ketones, which help tell your appetite when to quit, Layman says. So yes, fat can fill you up. The medium-chain fatty acid you eat most often is lauric acid; it’s in butter, milk, and cheese, but palm oil and coconut oil are the richest sources.

### LONG-CHAIN

The most common form of saturated fat is palmitic acid. Too much in your body’s tissues can signal poor heart health, which happens when your body stores excess carbs as fat. However, cooking with palm oil or lard won’t necessarily affect tissue levels, says Dariush Mozaffarian, M.D., dean of the School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University.

Illustration by EVAN OTO/SCIENCE SOURCE (top right)



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TO ME.



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How can you top oat bran?  
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Anthocyanins up,  
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## PROJECT THREE

# Lower Your BP by 8:00 a.m.

Start your day right, and you're less likely to end it in the ER. Here's a delicious way to decrease your stroke risk—at breakfast.



THE  
BETTER  
MAN  
PROJECT

**THIS IS HEART-STOPPING: AN ESTIMATED ONE IN FOUR MEN** between the ages of 35 and 44 have high blood pressure, according to the American Heart Association. Heredity may have something to do with it, but eating poorly can also lead to hypertension. And that pounding sensation in your temples puts you at risk for the two biggest killers of men:

stroke and heart attack. The good news is that eating smart may help keep your BP in check. It all starts in your kitchen: A 2013 study from the University of Minnesota found that people who ate breakfast most often were less likely to develop high blood pressure than those who rarely ate it. So fire up this easy at-home breakfast tomorrow, and live to eat many more.

## What You'll Need

OAT BRAN  
EGGS  
BLUEBERRIES  
A KETTLE  
GREEN TEA  
A WINDOW SEAT

## How to Do It

**1.** If you're still eating from a box with a cartoon character on it, it's time your tastes grew up. Hearty, creamy oat bran cereal delivers a wholesome payload of beta glucan, a type of fiber that may lower BP more effectively than other types, a 2015 U.K. review found. Plus, oat bran is a great base for sweet or savory flavors.

**2.** Fry up a couple of eggs and slide them on top of your oat bran cereal. In a 2012 Tulane

University study, men who consumed the most protein (about 30 percent of their daily calories) had lower blood pressure than those who took in the least. Add avocado, bacon (smoky protein!), black pepper... and hot sauce for the hell of it.

**3.** Gobble blueberries like a sweet cure. Folks in a Harvard study who scarfed down about half a cup of blueberries every week had 10 percent lower blood pressure than people who were berry bereft. It's all about the powerful plant compounds, known as anthocyanins, found in the berries.

**4.** Use the kettle to brew green tea. Five or six cups a day (fill your

travel mug) can cut systolic blood pressure by 2 points, a British study found. Research suggests that EGCG, a polyphenol in the tea, may help combat BP-elevating inflammation.

**5.** Now grab that window seat. In a 2014 study published in the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, people exposed to 20 minutes of UVA light saw their BP drop 2 points lower than that of a control group. UVA may help circulate nitric oxide in your blood, which regulates blood pressure and lowers stroke risk.

► Want to make more DIY muscle, food, and sex improvements? Visit [MensHealthBetterManProject.com/mh](http://MensHealthBetterManProject.com/mh).



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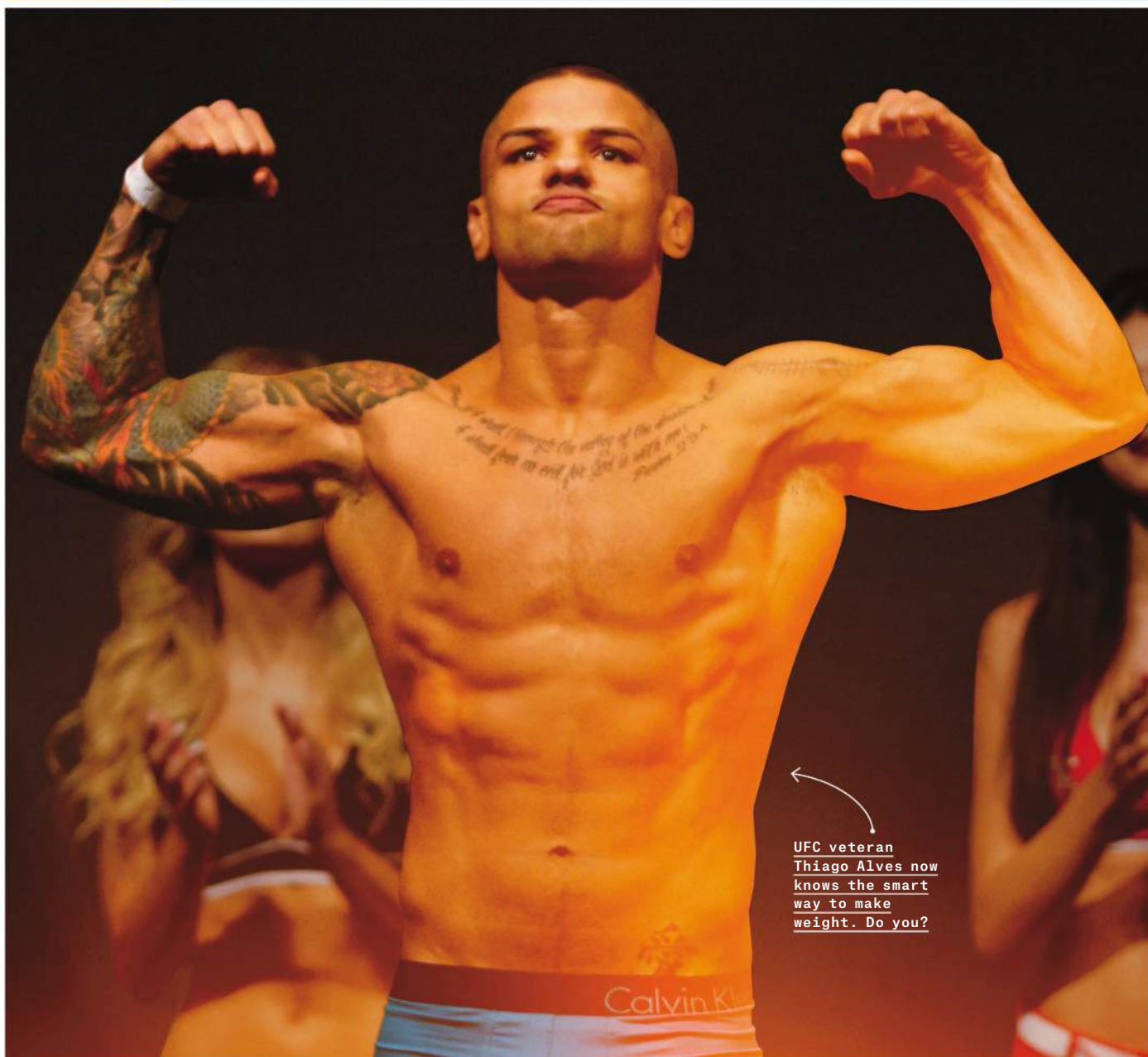
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way to make  
weight. Do you?

# Secrets from the Legends of Lean

Shed the fat you want to lose—for good—with these man-tested tactics. BY CINDY KUZMA



**SOME GUYS HAVE TO STEP ON A SCALE (OR AT LEAST WHIP** off their shirt) to earn a paycheck. If you fight in the octagon, do Olympic-level rowing, or perform for Cirque du Soleil, you learn how to hit your fighting weight. But weight cycling—which involves downsizing rapidly—is a losing proposition, says Yoni Freedhoff, M.D., director of the Bariatric Medical Institute in Ontario. “You lose muscle, which lowers your metabolic rate and makes it harder to lose weight the next round.” Instead of following an extreme diet, make changes you can live with. After all, that’s what these guys did.



## THE MORE VEGETABLES IN A LOW-CAL DIET, THE BETTER THE RESULT, RESEARCH SUGGESTS.



**The Fighter**  
**Thiago Alves**  
AGE 31 HEIGHT 5'10"

BETWEEN BOUTS

195

FIGHTING WEIGHT

171

Years ago, to prep for his bouts, Alves would drop 35 pounds in five weeks. He'd skip meals and do cardio twice a day. He'd pass out in the sauna. In 2010, after Alves had to forfeit a fight because he couldn't make weight, he decided to hire nutrition coach Mike Dolce. Now he stays closer to his fighting weight and trims down three weeks before a bout by reducing his portion sizes by 10 to 20 percent. If he needs a snack, he sips green tea.

### ▶ SET A SMART TARGET

"A goal without a date is simply a dream," Dolce says. Aim to lose no more than 1 pound per 100 pounds of your current weight per week. Plan accordingly. At meals, hit that portion rule by filling your plate with your usual amount, and then put one-fifth back. And pick up some Mighty Leaf Organic Green Dragon tea. It's balanced, not bitter.



**The Actor**  
**Patrick Heusinger**  
AGE 33 HEIGHT 6'0"

REGULAR WEIGHT

195

SCREEN WEIGHT

180

When Heusinger worked on *Tin Man*, a sci-fi pilot about a perfect humanoid form, he had to look better than ever—battery-life indicators stretched across his glistening abs. Although he was already fit, he had to drop 15 pounds. So he streamlined his diet using a meal service. The result: a prime-time six-pack.

### ▶ OUTSOURCE YOUR MEALS

When U.K. researchers had study participants try to lose 5 percent of their body weight, people who used a meal and snack delivery service were three times as likely to achieve success as those who didn't. For *MH*-approved delivery meals, check out our new line at [cheffd.com](http://cheffd.com). Heusinger coped with his cravings by keeping a food-lust list on his phone, from Krispy Kremes to marshmallow Oreos. Parking them there allowed him to acknowledge the cravings and let them go.



**The Jockey**  
**Jeff Johnston**  
AGE 45 HEIGHT 5'4"

REGULAR WEIGHT

130

RACING WEIGHT

114

Yes, Johnston has gained weight since he retired about eight years ago, but he's much healthier now. During his riding days, he would try to make weight by spending hours in the sauna. Other riders "flipped" (vomited) and used diuretics. Now Johnston stays lean with steak or chicken dinners with sides of vegetables and fruit. His regular exercise includes running, pushups, and working on his farm.

### ▶ BET ON YOURSELF

Jockeys use competition as motivation to trim down, but you can use an app like Pact (free) to earn money each time you hit the gym or eat healthy. Steal Johnston's meal plan too. Just don't limit yourself to one type of produce. Pile your plate with complementary flavors like sweet watermelon cubes with a spicy radish salad, or tart grapefruit segments with herbed grilled zucchini.



**The Rower**  
**Nick LaCava**  
AGE 28 HEIGHT 6'3"

REGULAR WEIGHT

165

OLYMPIC WEIGHT

155

As the 2012 Olympics approached, LaCava was 10 pounds over the limit. "I was in a four-person boat," he says. "The team has to average about 155 pounds." Despite having a sweet tooth, he cut out sugary treats and replaced them with vegetables. He trained for five hours each day and bookended sessions with high-protein, produce-packed meals.

### ▶ SHAKE IT OFF

In a recent study from Australia, the researchers noted that the same low-calorie diet seemed to produce greater weight loss the more vegetables it included. Aim for three to five servings a day. Can't nosh all that green stuff? Dump it all into a shake. (See [MensHealth.com/nutrition/best-smoothies](http://MensHealth.com/nutrition/best-smoothies).) And reward yourself daily with a 200-calorie (max) treat. *MH* likes the 70 percent cacao Alter Eco Dark Salted Brown Butter bar.



**The Acrobat**  
**Valeriy Simonenko**  
AGE 40 HEIGHT 5'10"

REGULAR WEIGHT

192

STAGE WEIGHT

192

Performing sex-themed dances for an audience of hundreds certainly offers motivation. "What I wore on stage was revealing," says Simonenko, who starred in Cirque du Soleil's *Zumanity*. He maintains his physique by consuming several hundred grams of protein each day and using a food-tracking app to monitor his intake.

### ▶ SPOT-CHECK YOUR FOOD

To retain muscle while shedding fat, eat about 1 gram of protein per pound of your body weight every day, says Marie Spano, M.S., R.D. Strive for at least 30 grams per meal to prevent hunger. Protein's effect on satiety is dose dependent: The more you eat at one sitting, the fuller you'll feel the rest of the day. Simonenko hits his target with Greek yogurt, protein powder, chicken, eggs, tuna steaks, and quinoa. Chart your totals with the free MyFitnessPal app.



## NUTRITION KNOW-IT-ALL

By Mike Roussell

### Is Greek yogurt any healthier than the regular kind?

TODD, WILMINGTON, DE  
The Greek stuff packs roughly double the protein and half the carbs, making it a great switch for most guys. But beware of sugar shock: Some Greek yogurts have 17 grams of sugar

per serving. (A dozen Oreos has 14 grams.) Use plain Greek yogurt (any fat percentage) and add flax or chia seeds for crunch and fresh berries for sweetness. Or add walnuts, pomegranate seeds, and a half scoop of vanilla protein powder for a "muscle sundae."

### What foods can I eat in the afternoon to prevent a crash?

KYLE, PHOENIX, AZ  
Don't give in to the energy-shot hype. Your body and brain need equal-size portions of protein at breakfast, lunch, and dinner to ward off power dips. And go easy on the

carbs. Overdoing it on bread, rice, cookies, or candy can lead to a crash, so stick to a fist-sized serving of carbs per meal. My go-to afternoon snack is a couple of cheese sticks and an apple. The protein-fat-sugar-fiber combo delivers steady energy, with no crash.



Mike Roussell, Ph.D., is a nutrition consultant based in Rochester, New York. Follow him on Twitter: @mikeroussell





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treadmills, your lifestyle.



## Solve the Calorie Equation

You can count calories all you want. Until you know these 6 key facts, they won't add up.

BY CLINT CARTER

A 300-CALORIE DOUGHNUT IS NOT the same as a 300-calorie chicken thigh. But you knew that, right? Of course you did. Doughnuts spike blood sugar and leave you hungry, while chicken provides tons of muscle-building, hunger-fighting protein. Yet outside of fitness magazines and CrossFit boxes, nutrition conversations rarely go deeper than calories. Calories are posted on restaurant menus and stamped on packaged foods. They're ticking away on fitness trackers and adding up in smartphone apps. They're like the Kardashians of nutrition—confusing and overrated, yet completely inescapable. And every time you see them, you're probably being fed misinformation.

Take nutrition labels: When it comes to calories, those labels can be misleading. Why? Because they presume all calories are the same. In fact, your body handles calories differently depending on their source. As for exercise and lifestyle, studies show that fitness trackers don't always count calories correctly, that the gym may not be the best place to burn them, and that those late nights at the office (and lack of sleep afterward) can pad your waist more than your wallet.

We'd bet there's at least six things you don't know about calories—and that lack of knowledge could be weighing you down. It's time to make the math less fuzzy.







### 1/ Your Fitness Tracker Has a Counting Problem

In a 2014 study from Iowa State University, scientists asked 60 people to strap on one of eight different fitness trackers and then complete an hourlong workout. Afterward, they compared each tracker's results to the participant's total oxygen consumption—a trusted measure of calorie burn. The verdict? Every tracker they tested was off by 9 to 23 percent.

► **USE YOUR PHONE** Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania found that apps like Moves and Health Mate showed less variability than wearable devices when tallying step counts, which is what most calorie estimators use to calculate how much you burn.



### 4/ The Processing of Food Unlocks More Calories

You already know that a Twinkie is a caloric nightmare. But any kind of processing—including juicing, grinding, milling, and cooking—breaks food down, rupturing cell walls and reducing the energy required for digestion. “Not only does processing make it easier to extract calories, but also fewer of them are excreted,” says Carmody. The result is more calories entering your body and staying there.

► **STOCK UP ON WHOLE FOODS** More than 75 percent of the calories Americans eat are from moderately or highly processed foods. Only 23 percent come from whole or minimally processed foods. Your goal: Reverse the ratio. Focus on single-ingredient foods, like fish and fruit.



### 2/ “Nutrition Facts” Labels Are Far from Accurate

The calorie stats on packaged foods are based on a 100-year-old formula and can be up to 25 percent off, says Rachel Carmody, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard. The true caloric content of a food may be lower than what's on its label, thanks to its “thermic effect” (i.e., the energy required to digest it). How much lower depends on how your body works to process it.

► **EAT MORE PROTEIN** Meats and vegetables make your metabolism burn hottest, delivering 20 to 30 percent fewer calories into your system than more-easily digested simple carbs like pasta and ice cream. Limit simple carbs to less than 10 percent of your total intake.



### 5/ You Can Burn More Calories Outside the Gym

If you're a 180-pound guy, your vigorous 30-minute strength workout will burn about 245 calories. That's good—but it's still only a fraction of what you burn each day through nonexercise activity thermogenesis. Indeed, the cumulative calorie burn of everyday pursuits like brushing your teeth and playing pool after work with your pals is far greater than anything you can hope to achieve in the gym.

► **STOP SITTING AROUND** “You have the ability to increase your burn by as much as 1,000 calories a day by spending more time in motion,” says James Levine, M.D., Ph.D., a professor of medicine at Mayo Clinic. Check out “Boost Your Burn” (right) for six ways to do just that.



### 3/ Antibiotics Might Inflate Your Calorie Intake

We're not talking about what your doctor prescribes. We're referring to what you buy from the butcher. Preliminary research shows that the 32.6 million pounds of antibiotics given to livestock each year can skew the balance of bacteria in your gut, nurturing a microbiome that's more efficient at pulling calories from food and shuttling them into your body, says Carmody.

► **GO ORGANIC** In addition to eating antibiotic-free meat, dairy, and fish, stock up on vegetables and whole grains. “A fiber-rich diet nurtures microbes that aren't as efficient at extracting energy,” says Carmody. If you're trying to lose weight, that's a good thing.



### 6/ Skipping Sleep Makes You a Calorie Vacuum

In a University of Colorado study, people who were restricted to five hours of sleep a night consumed 6 percent more calories a day. That alone was enough to pack on 2 pounds over a five-day period. And according to study author Kenneth Wright, Ph.D., sleep-deprived people are also more likely to binge on carbs and high-calorie snacks after dinner—habits linked to weight gain.

► **HYPNOTIZE YOURSELF** When you hit the sack, imagine yourself nailing 50 free throws or repeatedly teeing off on your favorite par 3. “Visualization reduces anxiety and lets your brain's sleep mechanism engage,” says *Men's Health* sleep advisor W. Christopher Winter, M.D.

## BOOST YOUR BURN

6 GYM-FREE WAYS TO TORCH NEARLY 700 MORE CALORIES EVERY DAY.

# 303

Biking to work for 40 minutes instead of driving for 20 minutes

# +

# 82

Joining a 30-minute conference call by cell and walking instead of staying put at your desk

# +

# 29

Delivering 15 messages in person rather than by email

# +

# 70

Sacrificing a half hour of Internet surfing to walk the dog

# +

# 123

Trading 45 minutes of TV watching to help tidy up the house

# +

# 50

Getting busy with your wife for 20 minutes before going to bed

EXTRA CALORIES BURNED

# 657

Calculations are for a 180-pound man.





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Office memo: It isn't just job security you have to worry about. Your 9-to-5 is slowly plotting to take you down.

# 6 Sneaky Office Assassins

Backstabbing coworkers just hurt your career. The real work enemies endanger your health.

BY HANNAH LAUTERBACK CHENEY



**CERTAIN JOBS COME WITH A CLEAR ELEMENT OF DANGER.** Skyscraper window washer. Rattlesnake handler. North Korean dictator. With these gigs, you know what you're signing up for. Not so with the average office job. While you probably think you're safe from anything worse than a paper cut or a bruised ego, hidden health threats are lurking by the copier, hanging from the ceiling, and crawling around the vending machine. Heck, you'd practically need a map to spot them all. Hmm... Okay, here it is, along with the stay-well wisdom you won't find in your employee handbook.



## 1

## The Open-Office Plan

You've heard the hype about open-office layouts: They foster collaboration! You'll be more productive! They also turn your workplace into a petri dish. In a Danish study, employees in these setups took 62 percent more sick days than those who sat in individual spaces. Of course, no walls means virus-laden sneezes and coughs travel more easily, but it also means you're constantly exposed to noise. This, combined with a lack of autonomy in the workplace, may be why people who toil away in open offices take more sick days, the study authors say.

## ▶ TUNE OUT YOUR COWORKERS

Researchers in Sweden have discovered that people are better able to recover from stress when they listen to recordings of nature sounds rather than normal ambient noises. Playing sounds like birds chirping at low levels, they explain, may be more effective because they're more familiar to you. Noises that are undecipherable, however, are tougher to tune out and can induce more stress.

## 2

## The Desk Chair

Warning: Dead man sitting. Every hour you spend glued to your seat at work increases your risk of developing deep vein thrombosis by 10 percent, say New Zealand scientists. And that risk rises exponentially if you don't move at noon: People who sit for prolonged periods and consistently scarf down lunch at their desk are twice as likely to form blood clots in their veins as those who eat elsewhere, the researchers say.



Try taking  
the au naturel  
approach to  
office noise.

## 3

## Fluorescent Lighting

Some office health threats are especially glaring—like those overhead fluorescent light fixtures. A recent Australian study review concluded that people who work under fluorescent bulbs have a higher risk of developing eye problems, including cataracts and possibly macular degeneration. That's because these bulbs beam out UV-A, UV-B, and UV-C radiation, which can be dangerous when it constantly bombards your eyes.

▶ **UNSEAT YOURSELF** It's easy to ignore a reminder on your computer to stand every half hour, so you need to get creative. Stow your brown-bag lunch in your office mailbox. (Read on for why it shouldn't be in the fridge.) When you get hungry enough, you'll have to stand up and hunt down your grub. And when you are sitting, do calf exercises to boost bloodflow to your legs, suggests M. Hassan Murad, M.D., M.P.H., a professor of medicine at Mayo Clinic. Alternate lifting your heels and toes a few times an hour.

▶ **DON'T LET BULBS SCREW WITH YOU** Flip off the fluorescents and raise the blinds. This indirect natural light—as opposed to blinding, in-your-face sunshine—can be easy on your eyes and has bonus benefits: Doses of daylight can help you feel healthier and log more shut-eye at night, say Northwestern University researchers. No window? Use a lamp with a warm white LED bulb; research from Stony Brook University suggests that they emit little to no UV radiation. Try the Philips 60W Equivalent Soft White A19 LED (\$5 for two, homedepot.com).



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<sup>†</sup> AMONG GASTROENTEROLOGISTS WHO RECOMMENDED A BRAND OF PROBIOTIC IN A SYMPHONY HEALTH SOLUTIONS 2014 SURVEY.

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\*THIS STATEMENT HAS NOT BEEN EVALUATED BY THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION. THIS PRODUCT IS NOT INTENDED TO DIAGNOSE, TREAT, CURE OR PREVENT ANY DISEASE.





A snake plant or a spider plant can soak up unhealthy air.

# 4

## The HVAC System

Most buildings are designed to keep the outside air out and the inside air in. While this saves your company on utility bills, it could cause a slew of health problems for you. That endlessly recycled air is likely contaminated with volatile organic compounds, toxic particles emitted from printers and copiers, cleaning solutions, and even your colleague's cologne, says Peter Dooley, M.S., an industrial hygienist. And because these par-

ticles are usually ultrafine, they tend to lodge more easily in your lungs, potentially causing headaches, dizziness, respiratory illnesses, or even heart disease. **▶ GROW A PAIR** So maybe you can't ask your boss to take it easy on the aftershave. What you *can* do is clear the air by bringing in a couple of potted plants and placing them on your desk and around the printers and copiers. According to a Penn State study, snake plants and spider plants have both been shown to be effective at reducing indoor ozone concentrations.

**WHAT'S THAT RACKET? PEOPLE WHO WORK IN OPEN OFFICES USE 62 PERCENT MORE SICK DAYS. EXPOSURE TO CONSTANT CHATTER MAY BE TO BLAME.**

# 5

## The Tenure

Cripes, look what the Man (or Woman) has done to you: You used to walk erect like a human being, but years of being chained to your desk have left you hunched like a seated Neanderthal. When your shoulders slump, your self-esteem does too: A 2014 study in *Health Psychology* found poor posture can subconsciously sap confidence.

**▶ GIVE PALMS TO POOR POSTURE** While sitting or standing, place your palms so they face the side of your thighs. This seemingly minor tweak opens up your chest and rolls back your shoulders, which is the proper form for good posture, says Susy Russell, P.T., M.S., a physical therapist based in Virginia.

# 6

## The Company Kitchen

Along with your midday meal, a helping of microbes may be on the menu too. Three of the germiest office spots are microwaves, refrigerators, and the handles on break room faucets, according to a Kimberly-Clark Professional report.

**▶ EMBRACE A LITTLE OCD** You're probably not going to disinfect the fridge or microwave after each use, so at least wash your hands before and after. Or simply avoid putting your food inside them.



## I HAVE WHAT? GEOGRAPHIC TONGUE

Even though you bite it and burn it, your tongue usually doesn't give you any lip. So you might be a little freaked out to look in the mirror and see red patches with raised white borders. Easy does it: You probably just have benign migratory glossitis, a.k.a. geographic tongue, a non-life-threatening condition that occurs in about 2 percent of the U.S. population. "It gives your tongue the appearance of a map," says Eric Stoopler, D.M.D., an associate pro-

fessor of oral medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. Why the atlas in your oral cavity? No one's sure, though it has been associated with psoriasis and stress. Maintain good oral hygiene, and the patches should vanish in a week or two, although they may recur, says Dr. Stoopler. If you experience any swelling, itching, or stinging, say "aah" for your dentist, who can prescribe topical meds to relieve the symptoms. —MELISSA ROMERO



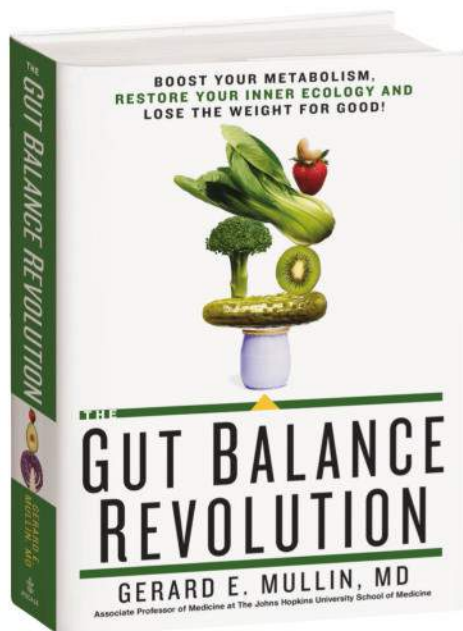


# TURN **BAD** GUT FLORA TO **GOOD** GUT FLORA AND LOSE WEIGHT!

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Surgeon General of the United States



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Carrying extra weight may mess with your sit-stand exam score.



### 3/ Life Span Sit-Stand Exam

Stand with your ankles crossed and your arms in front of you. Sit on the floor. Stand up. You've just gauged your longevity, say scientists in Brazil. A perfect score is 10; deduct ½ point for each time you lost your balance, and 1 point for each knee or hand you used for support. In the six-year study, people who scored below 8 had death rates up to five times higher than those of people with better scores.

#### ► CHANGE YOUR GRADE

The sit-stand exam measures your musculoskeletal fitness, a critical indicator of aging, says study author Claudio Gil Araújo, M.D., Ph.D. So take up tai chi. Canadian researchers found that twice-a-week sessions can improve your overall musculoskeletal fitness after 16 weeks. And keep your weight in check, says Dr. Araújo. Extra flab can lead to a low score.

## Save Your Life in One Minute

Just like your car, your body has its own diagnostic system. Find out what it's saying about your critical components to avoid a breakdown.

BY LAUREN DEL TURCO



### 1/ Heart Geometry Quiz

Diamonds trump heart disease. Bend each index finger in the form of an upside-down J; then press the nails together, viewing where they meet from the side. See a tiny diamond-shaped gap? If not, you may have "clubbing," a thickening of the fingertips possibly due to low blood O<sub>2</sub>. This could signal heart disease or even lung trouble, says *MH* cardiology advisor Prediman Krishan Shah, M.D.

#### ► CHANGE YOUR GRADE

Have your heart and lungs checked to make sure they're not in immediate peril. Clear? Try high-intensity interval training. You'll improve your VO<sub>2</sub> max, which is the best way to get more oxygen-rich blood pumping through your arteries. In a Japanese study, men who did 13 minutes of HIIT five days a week for eight weeks improved their VO<sub>2</sub> max by over 22 percent.

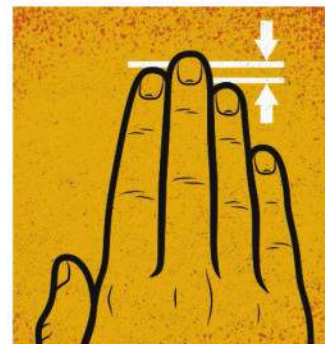


### 2/ Brain Balance Challenge

Act like a stork to spot stroke risk. Stand and lift one leg, keeping your knee bent and your eyes open. Watch the clock: If you can't hold the pose for 20 seconds, you may be at higher risk of stroke. Researchers in Japan recently found that difficulty balancing on one leg may signal that the small arteries in your heart have narrowed, which is linked to loss of motor coordination and cognitive decline.

#### ► CHANGE YOUR GRADE

Rein in high blood pressure; it's a major risk factor for small-vessel disease, says study author Yasuharu Tabara, Ph.D. Press a finger against your right nostril to close it, and then breathe in and out through the left nostril. Switch sides and repeat. Keep alternating for 15 minutes. In a study from India, people who did this averaged a 4½-point drop in systolic BP.



### 4/ Prostate Finger Check

There's no "rectal" in this digital exam. Compare the length of your right index finger with that of your right ring finger. Longer pointer? Your risk of developing prostate cancer may be a third lower than if your index were shorter, according to a *British Journal of Cancer* study. The length of these digits is possibly related to your exposure to testosterone in the womb, which can influence your future cancer risk.

#### ► CHANGE YOUR GRADE

Start a food fight. German scientists found that the prostate cancer risk of men who ate the most glucosinolate, a phytochemical in broccoli and Brussels sprouts, was a third lower than that of men who ate the least. And since belly fat is also linked to prostate tumors, nosh on tree nuts. A handful a week may help shrink your gut, say Loma Linda University researchers.



# INSIDEOUT EVENTS & PROMOTIONS

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**SITTING TALL**  
Soon, Conner  
hopes to be  
walking again.

## The Comeback Club

# How to Survive a 31-Foot Fall

One misstep had Mike Conner plummeting to his death. The biggest mystery? Why he's alive.

**BEFORE I FELL, I SAW A FLASH OF LIGHT. THEN I CLOSED my eyes and hit the concrete floor 31 feet below.**

It was April 2, 2013, and I was in the attic of a church with a couple of engineers. I'm a sales and service rep for fire sprinklers, and we were completing a system check for a new project. As I moved toward the catwalk, someone's flashlight suddenly beamed right in my face, and I instinctively stepped back—into nothing. I slammed into the concrete feet-first and felt my bones shattering all the way up my body. I was fully conscious as I lay there crumpled on the floor. When the paramedics arrived and cut off my pants, I could hear them gasp: The bones had ripped through my skin.

During my first 18 hours in the hospital, I underwent eight surgeries. I had broken my back, all my ribs, my right elbow, and almost every bone in my legs and feet. The doctors said I should've died—falling three stories

onto an unforgiving surface left me with injuries more commonly seen in victims of fatal car accidents.

Before the fall, I'd been an active guy. Even at 47, I could still dunk. I was a high school basketball ref, so four or five nights a week you'd find me running up and down the court. On the side, I'd hit the gym and do strength training. I even had simple exercises for my legs and ankles, like picking up marbles with my toes. Why am I telling you this? Because my doctors say the strength of my legs could be the reason I lived. Hell, it's the best theory they have so far.

I needed seven more surgeries to knit my body back together. And with a new knee on the way, I'm looking forward to walking. But being in a wheelchair hasn't stopped me from training to meet all the fitness benchmarks set by my recovery team. My new motto is "If you can move, you can exercise." —AS TOLD TO SHARA TONN

## PREPARE FOR A CRASH LANDING

GRAB ON TO THESE TIPS TO HELP PREVENT A FALL FROM BEING FATAL.

### TRAIN FOR TRAUMA

Major injuries trigger the production of lactic acid, too much of which can be toxic, says Andrew Dickinson, M.B.Ch.B., an emergency physician in the U.K. Dial up your cardio training now to make your body more tolerant of high lactic acid levels.

### LEAD WITH YOUR FEET

If you hit your head or hurt your chest in a fall, your risk of dying doubles. Injure both, and it's more than tenfold. Try to go feet-first so your legs absorb the impact, says John Edwards, M.D., a physical rehab specialist based in California.

### HIT THE BRAKES

For each second of uninterrupted falling, gravity increases your speed by 9.8 meters per second, says Dr. Edwards. Grab anything that might slow your momentum, such as a gutter or tree branches.

### PLAY POSSUM

Any movement after you land could put pressure on your spinal cord and cause paralysis, says Lisa Cannada, M.D., an orthopedic traumatologist at Saint Louis University School of Medicine. Stay still; wait for the paramedics. —S.T.





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credentials, not  
your hairy chin.

# Machines That Make the Man

Milestone life events demand best-in-class presentation. These high-tech tools will help you put your best face forward. BY DAN MICHEL



**THE FIRST TIME A GUY FIRES UP A POWER TOOL IS AN** epiphany: A little extra juice can help you finish the job in half the time (and feel like a badass). So it seems kind of remarkable that men haven't fully embraced this principle when it comes to dreaded tasks like shaving, scrubbing, and brushing. "Using an electric razor or an air flosser is like the difference between swinging a hammer and using a nail gun," says Michael Gilman, founder of the Grooming Lounge. Use the accessories on the following pages to supercharge your grooming regimen—and look better than ever.





### The Wedding

Whether you're flirting with a bridesmaid or getting hitched yourself, you want a flawless mug on the big day. This facial steamer hydrates your skin, boosts bloodflow, and makes exfoliation a breeze; the result is a much deeper clean. Just fill it with water and direct the nozzle at your face for 15 minutes in the morning. Follow up with a cleanser; Pirooz Sarshar, founder of the grooming line PRZMan, recommends his Clean Getaway face wash (\$15, manhoodtv.com).

**DR. DENNIS GROSS SKINCARE**  
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\$125, SEPHORA.COM



### The Job Interview

Don't let a shaving nick detract from that first impression. Take your morning shower and then turn on the Norelco 7700. "The steam and heat will lift and expose the hairs," says Sarshar. The razor's storage base also cleans, lubricates, and recharges the unit after each use, leaving you more time to triple-check that rockin' résumé.

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### THE LOOT ROLL-UP

Why waste a minute of your life untangling power cords? Stash accessories in this leather case, then roll and stow. Translation: less time cursing, more time honing your fantasy football roster.

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### The Reunion

Greet your pals with a fuller head of hair—without using pills or foams. Nutrastim's laser therapy comb stimulates follicles to promote hair growth. In an *American Journal of Clinical Dermatology* study, men who used a similar laser treatment (eight minutes a day, three days a week) showed a 20 percent increase in hair density after six months.

**NUTRASTIM PRO HAIR LASER COMB**  
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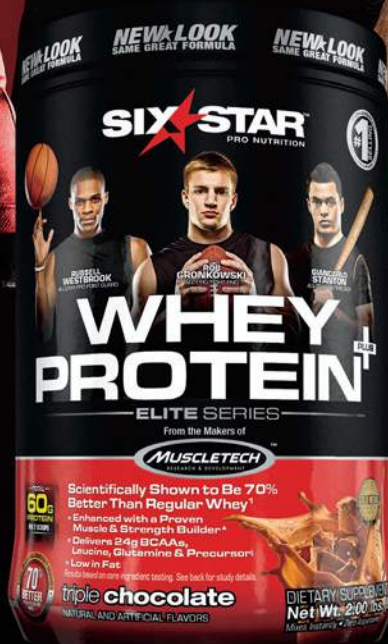
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### The Vacation

This ultraportable vibrating razor helps you trim evenly and limits your risk of a shaving nick. But the luxe handle is the real selling point here—it'll last a decade. To soothe your face and restore moisture, use a vitamin-rich aftershave, says Gilman. We like his postshave Best for Last (\$11, groominglounge.com).

**THE ART OF SHAVING  
POWER SHAVE COLLECTION  
FUSION RAZOR** \$195,  
THEARTOFSHAVING.COM

Aim this tool  
at your fangs,  
and you can quit  
lying to your  
dentist about how  
often you floss.



### The First Date

Flossing can be a chore, which is why it's so easy to skip before a night out. Remove the grunt work with a few bursts of air and water from the Philips Sonicare AirFloss Pro. It efficiently clears gunk between your teeth, combats bad breath, and promotes healthy gums. Kickstart the process with mouthwash to loosen debris, Gilman suggests.

**PHILIPS SONICARE AIRFLOSS PRO**  
\$90, BESTBUY.COM



### The Photo Shoot

A digital SLR may be your best friend when it's capturing a Cabo seascape, but it could be your worst enemy if the high-powered lens is focused on your spotty mug. For the best possible portrait, start by clearing oil and dead, acne-causing skin cells with Clinique for Men's sonic face brush. With 9,000-plus vibrations per minute, the charcoal-infused bristles dislodge bacteria and impurities to deep-clean your pores, Sarshar says. "It's like having a facial at home."

**CLINIQUE FOR MEN SONIC SYSTEM  
CLEANSING BRUSH**  
\$90, CLINIQUE.COM



## QUICK CHANGE

By Brian Boyé

### How risky is it to buy a watch from a non-authorized dealer?

JIM, ATLANTA, GA

Start with the obvious: The ticker could be bogus, or a discontinued version of a new style. You may never know because the serial number might be wiped clean. That means you have no warranty and won't be able to have it serviced by the manufacturer. And if that's the case, a major Swiss brand won't fix it. Buy a watch you'll want to pass down. It should keep ticking long after your own expiration date.

### Why do suit jackets have bottom buttons if you're not supposed to use them?

BILL, MACUNGIE, PA

Blame King Edward VII and his regal appetite. By the early 1900s, the king had gained so much weight that he couldn't fasten the bottom button of his vests and jackets. Not wanting to offend, the men in the palace followed suit, so to speak. The trend spread, and suits today are still made with the rule in mind. So closing your jacket completely constricts your movement. That's only useful if you, like Edward, are reaching for the dessert tray.

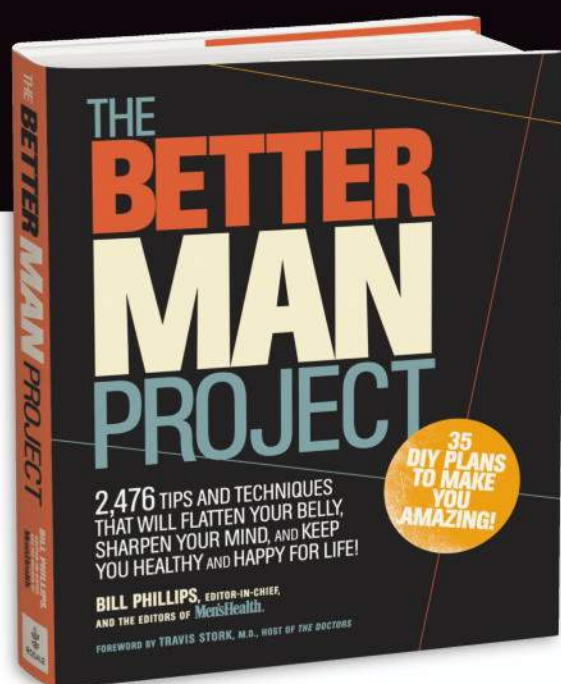


Brian Boyé is executive fashion director at *MH*. Follow him on Twitter: @brianboyé



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**Any man can get a little bit better each day.  
Every man should. **Start today.****



By Michael Easter

Photographs by  
Benjamin Lowy

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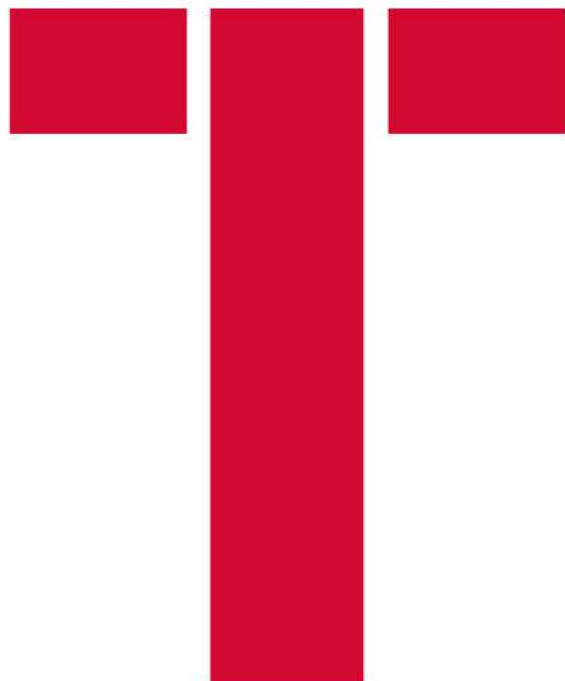


THINK

BIG

INSIDE EVERY  
MAN'S BRAIN IS  
A VOICE TELLING  
HIM TO JUST  
GIVE UP AND QUIT.  
GYM JONES  
WANTS TO HELP  
YOU SHUT THAT  
VOICE UP. BECAUSE  
IN THAT SILENCE  
IS STRENGTH.





## The madness is about to begin.

Fifteen men stand against a wall in a 6,000-square-foot converted warehouse in Salt Lake City. They're anxious, and it shows in their unconscious movements—shifting feet, tapping fingers, darting eyes. The punk music blasting from overhead speakers adds an almost palpable intensity as Gym Jones's splendidly profane, superhero-size fitness director, Rob MacDonald, saunters up and down their ranks.

"You, 48. You, 54. You, 63," says MacDonald, jabbing a finger at three men in turn. "That's how many calories you have to burn—in one minute. If you don't make it, you'll keep trying until you fucking do."

Muffled curses filter through the music as each man considers the immensity of his task. To reach his calorie goal, which MacDonald calculates using body size and fitness level, each man must give everything. Pain is a promise, suffering guaranteed.

The first victim saddles up on the AirDyne, a stationary bike with movable handles and a giant fan for a front wheel. It's a remarkably innocent-looking torture device; the harder you pedal, the harder pedaling becomes, thanks to the exponential nature of air resistance. MacDonald smiles diabolically. "Go!"

The man pedals like Mark Cavendish on bath salts—a blur of whirling, spinning, revolving legs and pushing, pulling, flailing arms. His grimace hardens and his breathing becomes increasingly frantic as each second ticks by. Then it's over. His minute is up and he's off the bike and on his back, gasping for air and jabbing at his quads. "Next!" shouts MacDonald.

One by one the men take the test, dropping to the floor or hobbling about on spasming legs when it's over. Some fail. A guy in his 20s who was assigned 48 calories finishes with 47. "The only thing that makes Rob happier than people hitting their mark is when they miss it by a calorie," says Mark Twight, Gym Jones's founder, who's known as much for sculpting some of Hollywood's most chiseled bodies as he is for eschewing the fame that comes with it. "He loves throwing them back into the fire."

As deranged as the AirDyne test seems, it isn't an exercise in fitness sadism or a blitzkrieg attempt to build lung capacity. It isn't even designed to train the body. It's a sweaty baptism into Gym Jones's foremost principle: The mind is primary.

▶ **NOWHERE TO HIDE**  
Everyone at Gym Jones, including training director Rob MacDonald (right), takes fitness tests as the group looks on.









**IN A STATE KNOWN FOR RELIGIOUS ZEAL, GYM JONES FITS** right in. Members are called disciples, and half-assed effort leads to excommunication. Many of the workouts—which range from crushing, hourlong circuits to vicious intervals on the rower or AirDyne—are insanely intense. “Each workout is designed to be a mental crucible, an exercise in the art of suffering,” Twight says. “Through suffering, you discover your true potential.”

Twight has practiced what he preaches. A celebrated mountaineer, he forged his mind-first fitness dogma while setting alpine speed records and claiming a first ascent on a notoriously treacherous frozen waterfall in the Canadian Rockies. “There were guys who were fitter and better technical climbers than I was,” says Twight. “But I did more transformative things because of what I had on board mentally.”

Twight founded Gym Jones in 2003 to help fellow climbers “unfuck their heads.” For years it existed on the fringes of hardcore fitness, gradually adding Special Forces recruits and MMA fighters to its ranks as news of Twight’s successes spread.

Then, in 2006, everything changed. The movie 300 hit theaters, and Twight, who’d been tasked with transforming the film’s doughy actors into a phalanx of hardened warriors, found himself in the limelight. Overnight, Gym Jones went from underground muscle factory to iconic fitness temple.

“Until that point, I ran the gym on the Fight Club model—it was invitation only, but if you were invited, I trained you for free,” says Twight. But after the movie was released, it was impossible to stay off the public’s radar. “The traffic it created nearly crashed our website,” he says. “We went from a few hundred hits a month to almost 13 million.”

The buzz was a curse, in a way. “It gave people the wrong idea. Aesthetics are actually our last concern,” says Twight. Gym Jones focuses on building true fitness, not the appearance of it, he explains. “And true fitness comes from training the muscle that sits in your skull: your brain.”

Most people aren’t prepared for what that entails. “They don’t know what all-out is because they’ve never been pushed to experience it,” says Twight. “Take the one-minute AirDyne test. If someone gave absolutely everything he had on the first try, it would be impossible to log a higher score on the second attempt. What holds people back? Maybe it’s fear. Maybe it’s laziness. But whatever it is, it’s 100 percent in their head.”

Those mental barriers also hinder performance in the weight room. Twight recalls a disciple who was fixated on pulling a double-body-weight deadlift, a Gym Jones fitness benchmark.

(See “Raise Your Standards,” right, for more.) “For him, that was 360 pounds,” says Twight. “He could lift 345 no problem, but put 360 on the bar and he couldn’t budge it. He thought 360 should be hard, so it was.” Twight’s solution: “We had him do a bunch of sets, switching up the plates each time until he lost track of them. Without knowing it, he did a couple of reps at 375.”

**IN 1924, THE NOBELIST ARCHIBALD** Hill, Ph.D., became the first physiologist to propose that the brain regulates the heart during exercise. That regulation, he theorized, was meant to protect the heart from

#### THE GYM JONES PLAYLIST

- ▶ **“Power & the Greed”**  
The Partisans
- ▶ **“Get Off Your Ass”**  
SNFU
- ▶ **“Institutionalized”**  
Suicidal Tendencies
- ▶ **“Liar for Hire”**  
D.O.A.
- ▶ **“Ain’t Nothin’ to Do”**  
Dead Boys
- ▶ **“Bitch in the Pit”**  
Body Count

## TEST YOUR LIMITS

Most guys think they push themselves in the gym. These tests will show you where your limit really is and help you exceed it.



### ▶ 1-Minute Sprint

“A minute might not seem long, but it is if you go hard enough,” says Gym Jones’s Rob MacDonald. “This will reveal how far you’re willing to push yourself. If you’re not crushed at the end, you held back.” **DIRECTIONS** Hop on a fan bike and try to burn as many calories as possible in 60 seconds. (The bike will display your result.) Average is 45; the Gym Jones record is 89.

## MASTER YOUR MIND

You’re a lot stronger than you think you are. Follow these tips to break through mental barriers and unlock your potential.



### Think Green

“When your workout starts to get tough, you’ll hear voices in your head telling you to slow down, save your energy, and quit,” says MacDonald. “Those are red-light thoughts. They will halt you completely if you don’t learn how to silence them.”

### DO THIS

“Fill your head with green-light thoughts, which are wholly positive,” suggests MacDonald. “Repeat statements like ‘I can do this’ or ‘I’ve survived worse.’ That positivity will power you through anything.”

## RAISE YOUR STANDARDS

Nothing about Gym Jones is ordinary, including these 10 strength and endurance benchmarks. Set them as goals to elevate every aspect of your fitness.

### ▶ RUN 1.5 MILES

9:00

### ▶ RUN 5K

22:00





#### ► 2,000-Meter Row

"This is a classic Gym Jones test," says MacDonald. "When you do circuits for time, you can cheat form and cut corners. This is just you and the computer: no cheating, no shortcuts—just objective feedback staring you right in the face."

**DIRECTIONS** Program the distance setting on a rowing machine for 2,000 meters. Try to complete the distance in less than 7 minutes.



#### ► 10-Meter Murder

"This test has you face 'the moment'—the point in a workout when you either persevere or quit," says MacDonald. **DIRECTIONS** Grab a stopwatch and head to a track. Set it for 1 minute and run 10 meters, resting for the time remaining in the minute. Next, run 20 meters, resting for the remainder of the minute. Keep adding 10 meters until you can't beat the clock. Your goal: 200 meters.



#### ► Death by Burpee

"You don't need a gym or any kind of special equipment to take this test," says MacDonald. "All you need is a willingness to suffer and a desire to discover what you're made of." **DIRECTIONS** Record the time you take to do 100 burpees, touching your chest to the floor during the pushup and jumping at the end of each rep. Try to finish faster each time you do it (every few weeks).



#### Make Friends with Pain

To beat your limits, you have to establish a positive relationship with pain. "When you reach your edge and push past it, you'll realize you weren't really at your edge in the first place," says Steve Portenga, Ph.D., a sports psychologist who's worked with Olympians.

#### DO THIS

Spend time in the "pain cave," the point on the intensity spectrum that's just shy of where you'd call it quits. "That will help you adapt to discomfort," says Portenga. Any of the tests above will take you there.



#### Be Accountable

Gym Jones has four AirDynes, but only one is used for tests. Disciples take turns while others look on. "People would never hit their mark if they did it at home alone," says MacDonald. "No one wants to look like a failure. Accountability ensures they aren't."

#### DO THIS

Find a good trainer or workout partner. "These people should not only motivate you to go hard but also keep you from slacking off on those days when you really don't feel like hitting the gym," says MacDonald.



#### Reward Yourself

For some people, the prospect of a reward is a powerful motivator, says Portenga. MacDonald agrees. When he sets a Gym Jones record, he treats himself to a burger and shake. Enjoying the reward also motivates him to hit the gym to burn it off.

#### DO THIS

Determine a reward that excites you, such as a high-calorie meal, concert tickets, or a week off from training. Then set a goal and reward yourself when you nail it. Can't think of a goal? Pick a fitness standard below.

#### ► FRONT SQUAT (1-REP MAX)

**1.5x**  
BODY WEIGHT  
PULLUP ENDURANCE  
**15** REPS

#### ► ROW 2,000 METERS

**7:00**  
BENCH PRESS (10 REPS)  
**105** LB

#### ► TURKISH GETUP (1-REP MAX)

**50%**  
BODY WEIGHT  
RUN 400 METERS  
**1:00**

#### ► DEADLIFT (1-REP MAX)

**2x**  
BODY WEIGHT  
BACK SQUAT (1x BODY WEIGHT)  
**20** REPS



overexertion. But Hill's idea took more than 70 years to gain traction, having been overshadowed by the more popular theory that physical exhaustion is purely a matter of cellular supply and demand.

Timothy Noakes, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Exercise Science and Sports Medicine Research Unit at the University of Cape Town, was taught the prevailing theory. When he started studying exercise physiology, he says, he was told that your muscles get tired—either because they run out of fuel or build up too much lactic acid—and that's why you stop. But no one had ever proved that muscles were getting too little oxygen or fuel. What's more, studies showed that people never recruited more than 50 percent of their muscle fibers—even during intense exercise, says Dr. Noakes. The theories just didn't seem to match reality.

Eventually it occurred to Dr. Noakes that because you activate muscle by way of your brain, your brain must also be responsible for determining how long, hard, and fast you push yourself. While Hill had been on the right track, the more research Dr. Noakes conducted on his own “central governor theory,” the more the supporting evidence mounted.

To what degree can the governor in your head influence performance? Suppose you were told to pedal to exhaustion on a stationary bike while being timed by a clock. “You're also told that it would be great if you could go for an hour,” Dr. Noakes says. What you're not told is that the clock is slow. “You'll find that when the clock reads an hour and five minutes, you'll stop, even though you really did an hour and a half,” says Dr. Noakes. By taking this cue, your mental governor established a performance limit that in no way reflected your actual fitness level.

“Your brain sabotages your performance,” says Dr. Noakes. “When you feel fatigued [during exercise], it's just an emotion. It has nothing to do with your physical state at all.”

Others agree. When Brazilian researcher Eduardo Fontes, Ph.D., analyzed cyclists' brain activity on an fMRI machine as they pedaled to exhaustion, he showed that emotion plays a fundamental role in performance. “We saw that the limbic lobe—the emotional center of the brain—lit up as the intensity increased and the cyclists became more exhausted,” he says. “The more active the limbic lobe became, the more emotion they tied to exertion and the more they slowed.”

Your mental state, Fontes says, is behind much of the variation in your day-to-day performance. “Anyone who works out knows that training performance can differ drastically from one session to the next,” he says. “Physiologically you might not have changed; what may have changed substantially is your mental state.”

Fontes has found that people who are able to detach from their emotions during exercise—for example, not thinking about their panting breaths or burning legs—almost always end up performing better. “When you exercise or compete, you have to mentally process what's happening to your body,” he says. “But the key is to not judge it as positive or negative; that's when your brain sets limits.”

Dr. Noakes tells the story of a woman running an elite 5,000-meter race. She was about 20 meters behind first place and had mentally committed herself to coming in fifth or sixth. But as she began her final lap, she saw the clock and realized that if she could run that lap in less than 64 seconds—something she had

► **THE PAIN CAVE**  
Every Gym Jones workout is a test of grit. If you're halfway done and don't want to quit, you're not going hard enough.









# Jacked by Gym Jones

Tear here  
and get ripped!

WARNING: THIS WORKOUT WILL MAKE YOU SWEAT, YELL, AND CURSE. WELCOME TO THE PAIN CAVE.

BEST  
NEW  
WORKOUT  
September  
2015



## DESIGNED BY

Rob MacDonald, Gym Jones training director

## BEST FOR

Testing your physical limits, building mental grit, and forging total-body strength, stamina, and power

## EQUIPMENT

Barbell, dip station, bench, weight plates, pullup bar

## CALORIES BURNED

678\*

## TIME

27:33

\*As measured by a fit 6'3", 255 lb man using a Garmin FR70 fitness watch

## DIRECTIONS

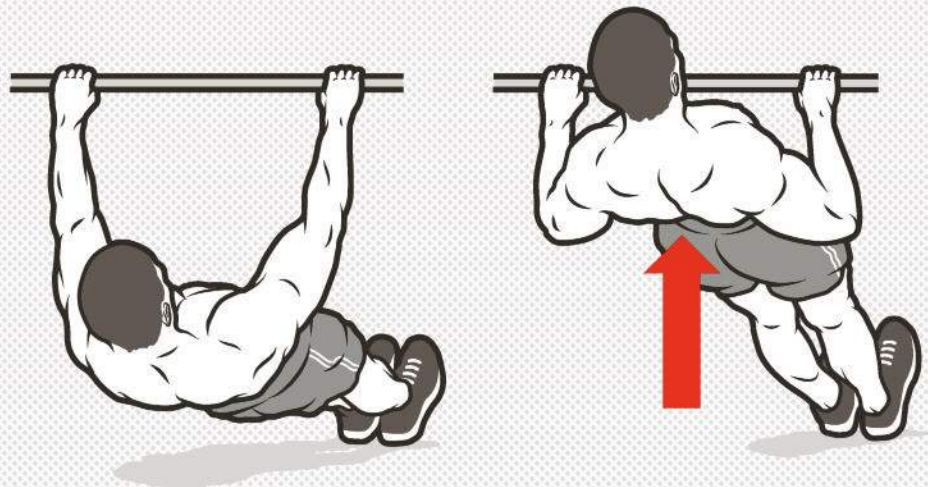
Do this workout 3 days a week for 4 weeks. Start with the warmup, doing the moves back-to-back in a circuit (10 reps of each, 5 circuits total). Next, load a barbell (see "Find Your Perfect Weight" on the back of this pullout) and do the main workout. Perform the exercises as a circuit; start with 10 reps per move and subtract 1 rep in each successive circuit (10 circuits total). Rest as needed. Try to finish the workout faster each week.

1

WARMUP

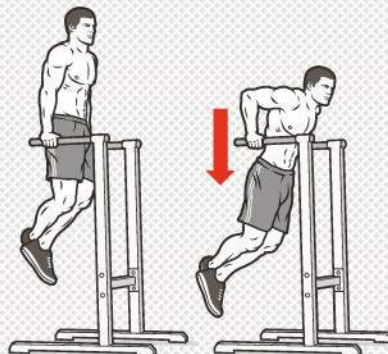
## 1/ Inverted Row

Set a bar at about waist height and hang below it using an overhand, shoulder-width grip. Your arms should be straight (hands directly above your shoulders), your body straight from head to ankles, and your heels touching the floor. Begin by pulling your shoulder blades back, and then continue to pull with your arms to lift your chest to the bar. Pause, and then lower your body back to the starting position.



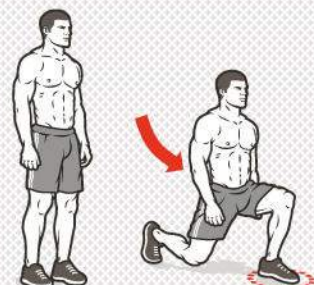
## 2/ Dip

Grab the bars of a dip station and lift yourself up so your arms are straight. Bend your knees and cross your ankles behind you. This is the starting position. Shift your torso forward and lower yourself as far as you can without discomfort. Pause; push back up to the starting position.



## 3/ Body-Weight Lunge

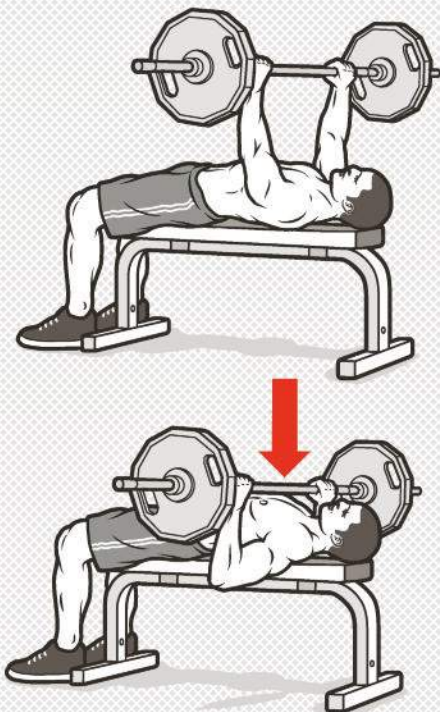
Stand tall with your arms at your sides. Step forward with your left leg and slowly lower your body until your front knee is bent at least 90 degrees. (Don't let your back knee touch the floor.) Pause, and push yourself back up to the starting position as quickly as possible.



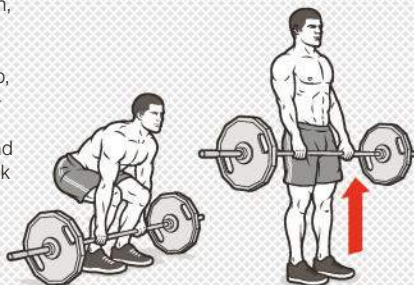


**1/ Barbell Bench Press**

Grab a barbell using an overhand grip that's just beyond shoulder width, and hold it above your sternum with your arms straight. Lower it straight down, pause, and push it back up to the starting position. Keep your elbows tucked so that when you're in the down position, your upper arms form a 45-degree angle to your body.

**2/ Barbell Deadlift**

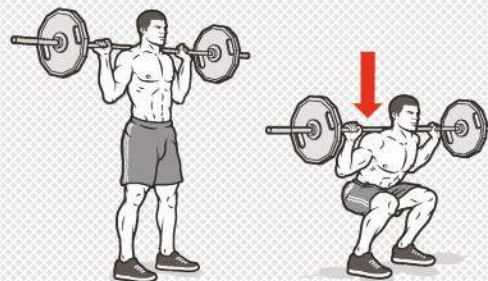
Roll the barbell against your shins and grab it using a shoulder-width, overhand grip. Keeping your back flat, pull your torso back and up, thrusting your hips forward as you stand up with the bar. Pause, and then lower the bar back to the floor, keeping it close to your body.

**3/ Pushup**

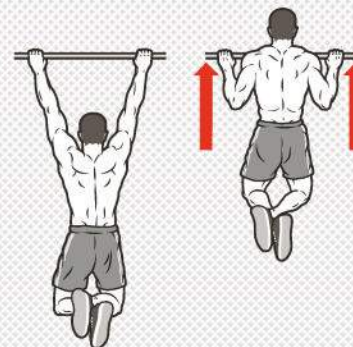
Assume a pushup position with your feet together, arms straight, and hands positioned below but slightly wider than your shoulders. (Your body should form a straight line from head to ankles.) Keeping your elbows tucked, lower your body until your chest nearly touches the floor. Pause, and return to the starting position.

**4/ Barbell Squat**

Stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart, using an overhand grip to hold a barbell across your upper back. Keeping your back flat, push your hips back and lower your body until your thighs are at least parallel to the floor. Pause, and return to the starting position.

**5/ Pullup**

Hang at arm's length from a pullup bar, using an overhand grip that's slightly beyond shoulder width. Pull your chest to the bar, squeezing your shoulder blades together. Pause, and slowly lower your body back to the starting position.



**FIND YOUR  
PERFECT WEIGHT  
ONE BAR AND ONE  
SET OF PLATES  
IS ALL YOU NEED.**

Gym Jones workouts often use the same load for every move. Why? "In the real world, things weigh what they weigh," says the gym's training director, Rob MacDon-

ald. "If you have to push a car, pick up a heavy bag, or move furniture, you don't get a magic button that adjusts the weight for you." For this workout, select the

heaviest load that allows you to complete all your sets of the weighted exercises. This chart will show you where you fall on the Gym Jones strength spectrum.

AVERAGE	→ 95	BARBELL WEIGHT (IN POUNDS)
STRONG	→ 135	
GYM JONES STANDARD	→ 185	
BADASS	→ 225	



**"EACH WORKOUT IS DESIGNED TO BE A MENTAL CRUCIBLE. THROUGH SUFFERING, YOU ARE ABLE TO DISCOVER YOUR TRUE POTENTIAL."**

for what?" he says. "Fitness is task dependent; you need to map things out and set a goal, whether that's to finish a triathlon or simply to look and feel healthier."

Everyone who walks into Gym Jones—Navy SEAL or sales rep—receives a customized training program. Nothing is arbitrary. Nothing is left to chance. And the commitment must be total. "You might work hard in the gym, but are you also sleeping eight hours or more a night, eating healthfully, and foam-rolling as you watch TV?" says MacDonald. "Constant attention to your goal is how you reach the next level. And recovery is half the battle: Don't do the work if you don't have the balls to rest."

Such devotion—what disciples sometimes refer to as drinking the Kool-Aid—affects what MacDonald calls a "deep chemical change" that guarantees success both in the gym and beyond. "The swagger that comes from reaching a fat-loss target, crushing a half marathon, putting up a record lift, or passing an endurance test doesn't wash off with your postworkout shower. It lingers," he says. Indeed, a man who gives his all to break a barrier in the gym may also be fighting with the same obsessive determination in other aspects of his life: building a happy family, closing a deal, inspiring change in others.

"A breakthrough here can lead to someone being a totally different, more confident, improved person," says Twight. "We see it every day. We're seeing it right now on the AirDyne."

**THE 20-SOMETHING GUY IS BACK ON THE BIKE, PEDALING** savagely in another attempt at 48 calories. The seconds tick—43, 42, 41—as his face gets redder and his breathing harder.

Eighteen, 17, 16...with 15 seconds to go, his face twists in agony and his eyes close as he digs deeper into the pain cave.

Three, two, one...the timer finally reaches zero and then goes blank. The man collapses heavily on the handles, gasping for air. And then, victory: "49 calories" flashes across the screen. He staggers away from the bike, smiling broadly despite the leg cramps he's probably feeling as he accepts high fives from everyone in the room.

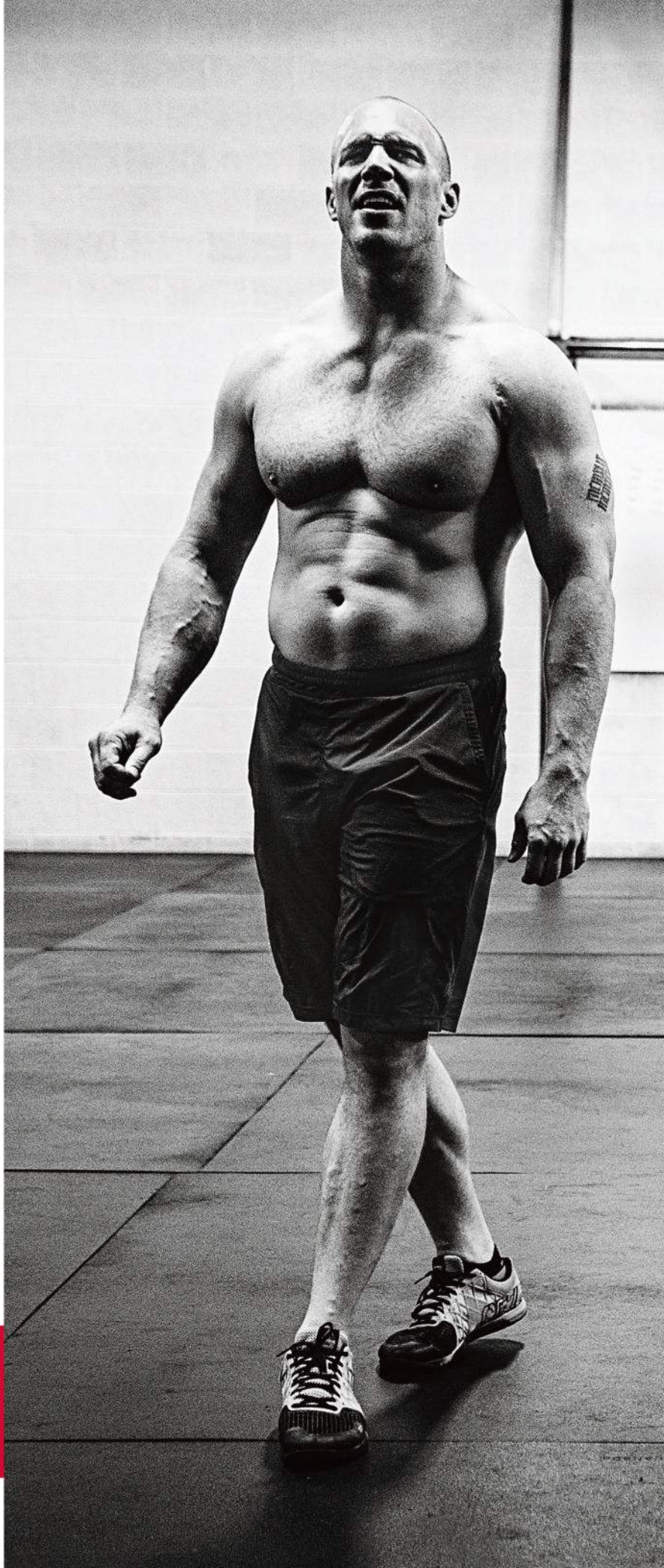
"If you don't push your mental limits, you're just going through the motions and you will stay at a certain level mentally and physically for life," says Twight. "But if you get comfortable with discomfort, if you put yourself in a dark place and come out the other side, you can accomplish anything." You just have to believe. ■

done before—she would qualify for the Olympics. "All of a sudden her thinking shifted and she didn't care about the race," Dr. Noakes says. "She had a new goal that mattered on a much deeper level, a goal she believed she could achieve." She hauled off, won the race, and qualified for the Olympics.

"Your biology sets your true limit, of course, but how close you get to it is determined by what you believe," says Dr. Noakes.

MacDonald specializes in that kind of focus shifting, which starts with goal setting. "If someone tells me they want to get fit, I ask, 'Fit

**THE ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT**  
MacDonald strides across Gym Jones's spartan interior, which lacks TVs, mirrors, and other distractions.











¡PICANTE!  
¡SABROSO!  
¡AUTÉNTICO!

# Now That's





# a Taco

AN AMERICAN TACO IS LIKE A RUSSIAN ELECTION: FRAUDULENT IN EVERY WAY. WE SENT OUR GUY TO MEXICO IN SEARCH OF HONEST STREET FOOD, AND IT BLEW HIS TASTEBUDS AWAY. MAKE SOME AT SU CASA ESTA NOCHE.

By Todd Kliman Photographs by James Wojcik P.93





# M

## My heart is racing. My hands are shaking.

I've been throwing back multiple beers 2 miles above sea level in a tiny cantina in Mexico City, so that probably has something to do with it. But my feverish state can also be explained by the taco I'm struggling to hold. It's an astonishment—a taco that makes me wonder what it is I've been eating for the entirety of my life and calling a taco.

The tortilla, made from fresh masa—a dried-corn dough—and lifted moments ago from a griddle, is as rough and hillocky as the surface of a Neapolitan pizza. It tastes like roasted corn. The beef, cooked for five hours, is so tender you could spread it. The three salsas on the table are so complex and intense that I feel as if I'm tasting liqueurs made from vegetables.

"It's good, no?" says my gustatory guide, Alejandro Escalante. He's a noted taco scholar (his book, *Tacopedia*, is now available in both Spanish and English editions), and he also happens to own the joint.

In response, I curse all tacos that have come before this one.

Escalante laughs. Easy for him: In Mexico City, great tacos are everywhere. You can find them in high-end restaurants and on street carts. Kids zip through the city on bikes, tacos sitting atop woven baskets mounted on the handlebars. The taco is a fixture of nearly every meal—breakfast, lunch, and dinner. It's almost inescapable. And you don't *want* to escape it.

What you do want to escape is the sad taco landscape in the United States. I wish I were just talking about fast-food tacos. If you do happen to find a state-side restaurant that uses corn tortillas rather than the flour variety, chances are they're dry, flat, tasteless Frisbees. Salsas are often watery and bland. And





while the upscale tacos at trendy Mexican restaurants may be more refined, they're not much more satisfying. Ask anyone who has ever shelled out \$17 for two mushy lobster tacos on pleather tortillas made with squid ink.

The taco, for Escalante, is the embodiment of centuries of Mexican history, culture, and culinary tradition. But when pressed, he will reduce the transcendental taco to a trio of things: the tortilla, the filling, and the salsa.

"There are three parts to the taco," he says. "I call that the holy trinity of the taco. If all three parts are great, then you have greatness."

**ON A COOL, BREEZY AFTERNOON I FOLLOW ESCALANTE TO A TORTILLERIA** near his restaurant. The shop has a mill for grinding and a machine that resembles an old printing press, which stamps out tortillas in assembly-line fashion. The tortilla maker pinches off a wad of masa and hands it to me. The masa is as yellow as buttery cookie dough. It has a smooth texture, though with a pronounced graininess, as if it contained finely ground nuts.

In the United States, octopus tacos might be easier to find than masa. This dough incorporates lime, a mineral compound that helps soften the grain. But you can find masa harina, a preground powder you mix with water—a shortcut, like making burgers from preground patties. Making your own tortillas takes time, but the effort pays off in flavor.

Escalante pulls a cooked tortilla off the belt and hands me a shaker of salt. The warmth and the salt release the deep, nutty corn flavor. I'm reminded of hot, salty popcorn. Escalante delights at the comparison. It was his ancestors, after all, who invented popcorn some 6,000 years ago.

"It's fast food, yes," says Escalante, "but everything that goes into it is not fast. It is slow and takes time and care to make delicious."

**STREET MEATS**  
Mexico City cranks out countless tacos, like smoky tacos al pastor (lower left) and spicy chorizo tacos (lower right).

**EACH FRIDAY IN MEXICO CITY, TAQUERÍAS BREAK** out the al pastor, a marinated pork taco filler, and the fragrance in the streets is irresistible. Guys in suits, construction workers, tourists: They're all here for a fix. To look at the al pastor meat rotating on its vertical spit, you would think you'd wandered into a gyro shop—except that Mexicans use pork for this, not lamb. The offerings I sample aren't particularly juicy, but here's the thing: They have great char. It's the flavor of an outdoor cookout, suggestive of grilled burgers or thick, crusty steaks.

Later I encounter a similar though elevated smokiness at El Hidalguense. The restaurant's owner, Moisés Rodríguez, has a farm two hours from the city; there he butchers lambs and roasts them for eight hours in a pit covered with agave leaves. The meat is incredibly juicy and coats my tongue with richness. Though it's not a stew, you could eat it with a spoon. And perfuming it all is the smoke of the charred agave, which gives the meat a subtle pepperiness.

And then it dawns on me: The problem with the meat in U.S. tacos isn't the quality; it's that the meat doesn't have those delectable Mexican *ahumada* and *húmeda* qualities—smoky, moist goodness.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 119

**"THERE ARE THREE PARTS TO THE TACO. I CALL THAT THE HOLY TRINITY OF THE TACO. IF ALL THREE PARTS ARE GREAT, THEN YOU HAVE GREATNESS."**



# Construct the Ultimate Taco!

¡TAN FÁCIL  
COMO UNO,  
DOS, TRES!

You can experience smoky, meaty, tangy, life-changing tacos at home by embracing the flavor traditions of authentic Mexican cuisine. No taco seasoning packet required.



## Pickled Red Onions

In a pan on low, toast ½ tsp cumin seed 4 to 5 minutes. Grind to a powder; mix in ½ sliced red onion, 1 tsp each white balsamic and red-wine vinegars, salt, and pepper. Soak 20 minutes.



## Cotija

If you like your tacos with a touch of creaminess, try this cow's-milk cheese. It carries a tart, salty taste, like feta minus a bit of the funk. Just crumble the cheese with a fork.

## Mexican Oregano

This dried herb packs more pungency than the Italian and Greek versions. Buy a bag (\$7 for 4 oz, penzeys.com) and crush the leaves over tacos for an intense aromatic hit.



## SUPERIOR SALSA

- ½ CUP CANOLA OIL
- 1 DRIED ANCHO CHILE, STEMMED AND SEEDED
- 1 DRIED GUAJILLO CHILE, STEMMED AND SEEDED
- 2 DRIED CHILES DE ÁRBOL, STEMMED AND SEEDED
- 1 TOMATO, DICED
- ½ MEDIUM WHITE ONION, DICED
- 2 GARLIC CLOVES, ROUGHLY CHOPPED
- ¼ CUP UNSALTED PEANUTS



## PEANUT SALSA

**1/** In a large skillet, heat the oil on medium. Add the dried chiles and cook until sizzling and aromatic, about 1 minute. Remove and set them aside.

**2/** In the same skillet you used to cook the chiles, add the tomato, onion, garlic, and peanuts. Cook, stirring frequently, until the onion turns translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Strain out the solids, reserving the oil, and allow them to cool.

**3/** In a blender or food processor, add the reserved chiles and strained solid ingredients, plus 5 Tbsp of the reserved cooking oil. Blend, gradually adding up to ½ cup of water until the mixture is thick but still spoonable. Season with salt to taste. *Makes ¾ cups*

The salsa should keep in your refrigerator for up to a week. Any leftovers also work well as a blanket for enchiladas or as a marinade for grilled chicken or pork.

## ¡PRONTO!

In a blender, pulverize 2 chopped jalapeños, 6 chopped tomatillos, ½ chopped white onion, ½ chopped avocado, 1 Tbsp chopped cilantro, the juice of ½ lime, and up to ½ cup water. Stir in another ½ chopped avocado; add salt to taste. *Makes ¾ cups*



## GRILLED PORK TACOS AL PASTOR

### PERFECTLY CHARRED MEAT

- 2 DRIED GUAJILLO CHILES, STEMMED
- 2 GARLIC CLOVES
- ½ MEDIUM WHITE ONION, ROUGHLY CHOPPED
- 1 TSP DRIED MEXICAN OREGANO
- 1 WHOLE CLOVE
- ½ TSP GROUND CINNAMON
- 6 BLACK PEPPERCORNS
- 1 LB TRIMMED PORK SHOULDER, CUT INTO ½"-THICK SLICES

### ¡RÁPIDO!

'Shroom tacos: In a skillet on medium, heat 1 Tbsp oil. Add ¼ cup minced onion, 1 minced garlic clove, and 1 minced serrano. Cook 2 minutes. Add 1½ cups sliced mushrooms. Sauté 5 minutes. Stir in 1 diced tomato, salt, 1 Tbsp minced cilantro.

## MASA HARINA TORTILLAS

### HOMEMADE TORTILLAS

- 2 CUPS BOB'S RED MILL GOLDEN MASA HARINA
- ¼ TSP KOSHER OR SEA SALT
- 1½ CUPS WATER
- 1 LARGE ZIP-TOP BAG, CUT ALONG BOTH SIDE SEAMS

### ¡ÁNDALE!

No time to knead? Buy corn tortillas from the store and prep smart. Slap a tortilla on a dry skillet and cook until it's pliable and puffed, turning every 10 seconds, 40 seconds total. Then lightly brush it with canola oil and season both sides with salt.

- 1/ In a medium pot, add 2 cups water along with the chiles, garlic, onion, oregano, clove, cinnamon, and peppercorns. Add a big pinch of salt. Bring everything to a boil and then lower the heat to a simmer and cook 15 more minutes.
- 2/ Allow the mixture to cool and then transfer it to a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Strain and season with salt to taste. Now pour it into a zip-top bag and add the meat. Let it marinate in the fridge for at least 3 hours.
- 3/ Preheat your grill to direct, high heat. Remove the meat from the marinade and grill until well seared and charred on all sides, about 2 minutes per side. Allow the pork to rest 5 minutes.
- 4/ To serve, chop the grilled pork, divide it among your tortillas, and top with chopped white onion and cilantro. Makes 8 servings

- 1/ In a bowl, mix the masa harina and salt. Then add up to 1½ cups water until the dough is a soft putty—moist but not wet, compact but still pliable.
- 2/ Work the dough—push, fold, repeat—until it's smooth, about 5 minutes. Pinch off 12 pieces (each about the size of a golf ball) and cover them with a towel. Place a piece on one side of the zip-top bag. Fold the other side over the dough and press firmly until you form a thin, even pancake about 6" in diameter.
- Remove and set aside, covered. Repeat with the remaining dough.
- 3/ Heat a cast-iron skillet on medium. When it's hot, add a dough disk, pressing it firmly onto the surface. Cook until the edges lift, about 1 minute; flip and cook 1 minute. Flip again, pressing the tortilla into the pan, and cook until puffed, 30 seconds or so. Transfer to a plate and season with salt. Repeat. Serve immediately or, to reheat, wrap them in foil and warm in a 250°F oven. Makes 12 tortillas







RAISE

— By David Hochman

— Photographs by  
Matthias Vriens-McGrath

— Page 99

*HE ACTED RECKLESSLY IN LIFE  
BUT BRILLIANTLY ONSCREEN.*

SOMEHELL,

WISE UP,

*NOW COLIN FARRELL LOOKS  
AT LIFE WITH CLEAR EYES—*

*AND HAS FOUND THE PEACE  
HE WAS SEEKING ALL ALONG.*

SUCCESS



# COLIN FARRELL LIGHTS UP A CIGARETTE AND EXPLAINS HOW HE QUIT SMOKING A FEW YEARS AGO.

"I wrote a breakup letter to the Spirit of Tobacco," he says in the parking lot of a Hollywood hotel. It's the day before his 39th birthday, and Farrell, lean and fit in a black stretch T-shirt and black jeans, has the buoyant air of a man who's not quite ready to let go of the boy. "I thanked tobacco for being with me through thick and thin but said, 'I don't need you anymore,'" he says.

The Irish actor's farewell to nicotine was an elaborate ritual (learned in rehab) that reveals him as someone who is single-minded and a touch eccentric—and who likes to amuse himself. "I got a frying pan and tossed in the letter with a load of tobacco, put some paraffin over it, and lit a match that sent a big, wallowing cloud up into the sky," he says. "Then I didn't have a cigarette for another two years."

Farrell takes a slow, satisfied drag. He started back with the odd smoke at dinner parties. Now he's somewhere between two and six a day. But, he says with a flex of those caterpillar eyebrows, "I mean, I used to smoke 40 a day, so things could be much worse." (Careful, mate: Backsliding is dangerous. Studies show that online support groups or meditation can help you stay off the cigs.)

To quote the most beloved poet of the isle of the actor's birth, "People who lean on logic and philosophy and rational exposition end by starving the best part of the mind." That's William Butler Yeats, but clearly Farrell abides by those words. His path to success is marked by decisions that routinely upend convention; yet inevitably he comes out winning. This is a guy who sent a videotape to the director of *Tigerland*—and then flew himself out to Hollywood to audition. When asked why an Irish lad was cast as Jesse James in *American Outlaws*, he shrugged and said he had no idea.

Or consider his latest role in HBO's *True Detective* as Ray Velcoro, a rudderless sleuth with a short fuse. Opposite Vince Vaughn as a career criminal trying to go legit, Farrell brings the right mix of moody machismo and emotional nakedness to kick aside critics who sniffed that season two could only fall short of season one. (That season earned 12 Emmy nominations, including outstanding drama and outstanding actor nods for Matthew McConaughey and Woody Harrelson.)

But as episode one opens on Farrell's character dropping off his terrified kid at the wolves' den

that is middle school, you forget that last season even happened. Vaughn says, "Colin has this quality of being very authentic, and that comes across whether he's punching a guy in a scene or joking around in rehearsal. You sense immense character behind those eyes."

We find a quiet booth in the hotel's coffee shop. Our server pretends she's totally chill with having one of Hollywood's favorite and most ridiculously good-looking leading men at her table. *Phone Booth*, *Minority Report*, *Total Recall*, *Saving Mr. Banks*, *In Bruges*—the movies must be flashing in her head because she completely blanks on what Farrell orders in that mellifluous brogue of his. (Hint: It's green and it's tea.)

Farrell understands. "I waited tables," he tells her. He also taught line dancing and messed around in retail. This was as a teenager in the Dublin suburb of Castleknock, where his ex-athlete father ran a newsstand and a health-food store. Even then, Farrell's outlook was idiosyncratic. Three months shy of graduating high school, he left—or, more accurately, was told to go. "What happened was, the study supervisor put his hands on me, and I kind of grabbed him and had a few words," he says. "And that was the last in a long list of seemingly small incidents that individually weren't that harmful or discordant."

Other kids might have been crushed. Farrell insists it was "fucking great. I was so relieved. It was like that *Shawshank Redemption* moment where Tim Robbins escapes into the river. I was free. I didn't know what I was going to do, but I knew I didn't have to play by anyone's rules. The plan was up to me."

It's a plan that's worked out well. Despite personal ups and downs, hits and misfires, and a few sobering wake-up calls, the actor, now a doting single dad to two young boys, understands that the best education is often life itself.



**"DISCOMFORT IS A MESSAGE BEARER."** FARRELL frequently comes out with profundities that masquerade as throwaways. "Every feeling of discomfort is a moment waiting to be decoded. Something is being invoked inside you, and you need to learn to commune with it or it tends to swallow you up."

We are talking about alcohol and how Farrell doesn't need it anymore. There was a time during his early years in L.A. when liquor (and occasionally

drugs) lubricated every interaction, every intimacy. "I had a very particular energy for the first five or six or seven years I spent in America," he says. "I was loud and gregarious and drunk most of the time, and my general mindset was 'Fuck this and fuck that and fuck the other.'"

But Farrell was too charismatic and talented to dismiss. Kevin Spacey spotted him on stage in London in the late 1990s and recommended him for a role in *Ordinary Decent Criminal*, which was followed by parts in *Tigerland*, *Phone Booth*, *Veronica Guerin*, and Oliver Stone's *Alexander*. But Farrell soon had a stalker, an infamous sex tape, legal proceedings

CONTINUED ON PAGE 119

## RAPID FIRE COLIN FARRELL

### Toughest Accent

"Standard American. There's no such thing. Where in America? Chicago? Where in Chicago? How much do I earn? How much did my father earn?"

### Must-See TV

"*The Biggest Loser*. I can get a large-size lump in my throat watching the end. It's like rehab—a bunch of people realizing how they lost themselves."

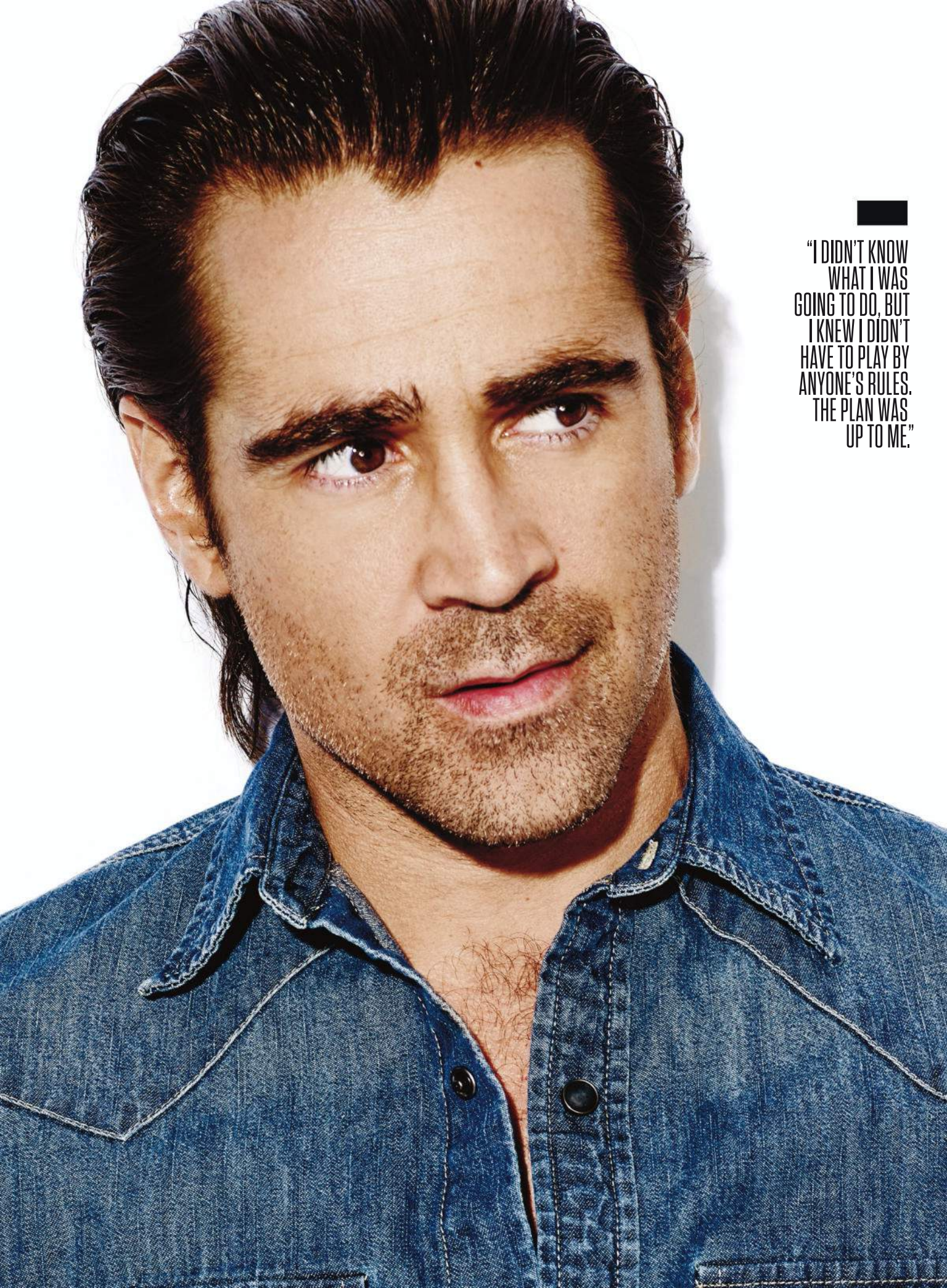
### Dream Ride

"When I was doing *Miami Vice*, I had a Chevy SS—late '60s, early '70s, green with a white stripe down the front. Now that car was fun to drive."





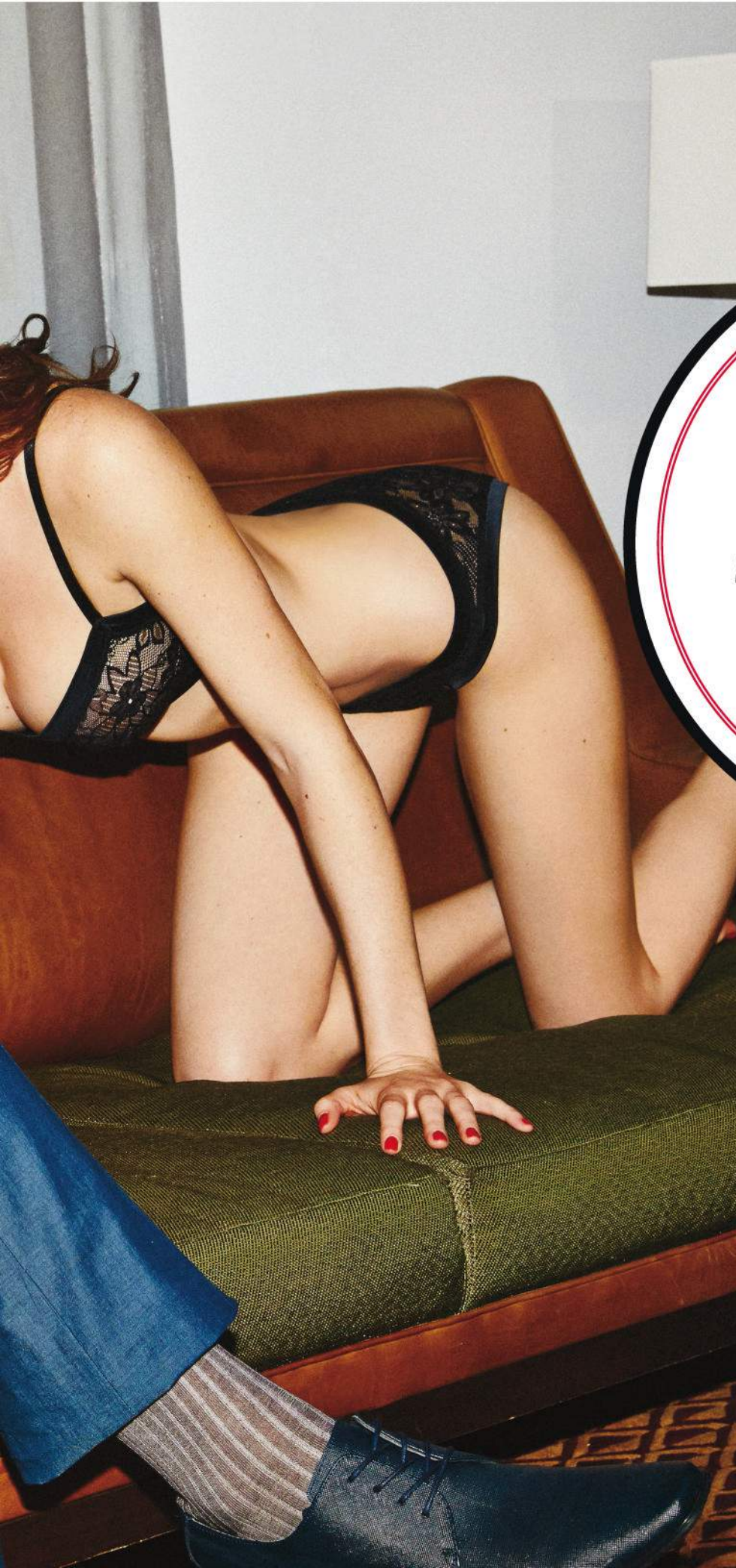
"I DIDN'T KNOW  
WHAT I WAS  
GOING TO DO, BUT  
I KNEW I DIDN'T  
HAVE TO PLAY BY  
ANYONE'S RULES.  
THE PLAN WAS  
UP TO ME."











# 25

**WAYS TO SAVE YOUR  
MARRIAGE  
(AND YOUR LIFE)**



Want to know the surprising thing? If you save the relationship, you'll save your own ass as well. That's because the shaky superstructure of your health and wealth rests on the emotional bedrock of your marriage. To build a more perfect union, start here.

PAGE  
103

**BY LAURENCE ROY STAINS**

PHOTOGRAPH BY AARON RICHTER





**EVEN HAPPILY MARRIED GUYS** wonder what sorts of itches they'd be scratching if they were to ditch the wife. Their "newly single" fantasy might include long, naked weekends with a Hooters waitress, but the reality is not nearly as provocative. As a divorced man, you are 39 percent more likely to commit suicide. Even if you don't kill yourself, you will die younger. And forget chasing tail; your mobility also suffers from singlehood. Oh, and yes, divorce crushes your finances: A study of divorced baby boomers found that a split slashed their wealth to less than a quarter of what they would've had if they'd never wed at all. So we've collected 25 tips that can protect you from the sickly, cash-poor, single life. Save your marriage before it's too late!

No.  
01

## Assume the Best Explanation for What She Did, Not the Worst

Think of an annoying thing she does that you regularly misinterpret. Psychologists call this a "maladaptive attribution." Then stop it. You can improve your marriage simply by thinking about it differently; choose the kindest possible interpretation for her actions instead of the ugliest.



## TAKE THE ZERO-NEGATIVITY CHALLENGE

How many days this month can you go without doing or saying a single negative, hurtful thing to your partner? Give it a try, suggest Harville Hendrix, Ph.D., and Helen LaKelly Hunt, Ph.D., who've written 10 books on relationships. You can strike sarcasm off the list too. In the words of Terry Real, the author of *The New Rules of Marriage*: "Sarcasm eats intimacy." Your words matter. Measure them.

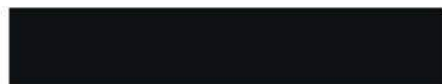
No.  
03



## A FOOT MASSAGE WORKS WONDERS; A HEAD MASSAGE WORKS MIRACLES

No. 04

DON'T  
MAKE  
COMPLAINTS  
MAKE  
A REQUEST  
INSTEAD  
POLITELY



## 05/WRITE HER A LETTER—ON PAPER

A UNIVERSITY OF DENVER STUDY OF SOLDIERS FOUND THAT EXCHANGING LETTERS WITH THEIR WIVES HAD A MORE POSITIVE AND LONG-LASTING EFFECT THAN TEXTING DID.







## Sweat with Her, Then Hop in the Shower Together Later. It's Healthy!

For 20 years, Thomas Bradbury, Ph.D., and Benjamin Karney, Ph.D., of UCLA's Marriage Lab, followed more than 1,000 couples to evaluate the different ways partners support each other in their efforts to make important changes in their lives. Bradbury says he was amazed that the most common topic—coming up in about seven out of 10 couples—was that they wanted to change to a healthier lifestyle. Their book, *Love Me Slender*, shows couples how to work together to maintain healthy weights. A new large-scale British study seconds that: “Men and women are more likely to make a positive health behavior change if their partner does too,” the authors note.

# 09

## Look Past Her Flaws (Don't Try to Eliminate Them)

“Look above the things you find annoying or unpleasant,” says Douglas LaBier, Ph.D., a psychologist based in D.C. “Respond to the best qualities in her—which will always make her best side stronger.”

No.  
10



## Tell the Kids to Shut Up While You Two “Connect”

“A measly 15 minutes,” says William Doherty, Ph.D., a professor of family social science at the University of Minnesota. These kinds of “connection rituals” hotwire your whole life together. So do it.

No.  
06

## WATCH THIS SEX VIDEO

“Makeup sex” doesn’t solve a fight, and latent anger can be a lust killer. Sit down together and watch family therapist Michele Weiner-Davis’s TEDx talk “The Sex-Starved Marriage” on YouTube. Even if you’re not exactly starving, this video can help stoke hunger now and forever.

# 07

## Don't Try to Fix Her Problems—Just Listen to Them

“Men are conditioned to solve problems and to protect the women they love,” says couples therapist Shiri Cohen, Ph.D., an instructor at Harvard Medical School. “This can backfire when all she really wants is to be heard,” she says. “The next time your mate needs to vent or complain, just give her your open ears.” If you think you do have a good solution, wait and bring it up later during a separate conversation.







No.  
11

**AS GO MOM AND DAD, SO GO THEIR KIDS. THE SOONER THE LITTLE MONSTERS UNDERSTAND THAT THEY'RE PART OF YOUR LIFE, NOT VICE VERSA, THE BETTER.**

**12**

**Always Look for Ways to Turn "Me" into "We"**

Listen up as Monmouth University psychologist Gary Lewandowski Jr., Ph.D., sets you (and her) straight with this not-so-obvious fact: "Research shows that people who see them-

selves as overlapping with their partner have better relationships. You begin to lose track of where one partner begins and the other ends." Coach was right: It's all about the team.





**YOU'VE MADE  
YOUR BED**  
Now kick the kids  
(and their plush toys)  
out of it. The closer  
Mom and Dad are, the  
better their kids fare.

**13**

## RESPOND TO GOOD NEWS AND BAD

Your wife gets cool new responsibilities at work. How do you respond? Passively (“That’s nice. What’s for dinner?”), destructively (“Less time for me, right?”) or—jackpot!—actively and constructively (“Wow, let’s party!”)? According to UC Santa Barbara psychologist Shelly Gable, Ph.D., positive responses reassure your wife that you’ll also support her when the news is bad.

## 7 REASONS TO FIX YOUR MARRIAGE—TODAY!

THINK STOCKS ARE VOLATILE?  
HOW ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP?  
HERE’S HOW THOSE BUMPS MAY  
MAKE YOU A LESS HEALTHY MAN.

Compiled by Lauren Del Turco

### PEOPLE IN SHAKY MARRIAGES HAVE...

An Increased Risk  
of Heart Attack



A Slower Rate of  
Wound Healing



Higher Artery  
Calcification

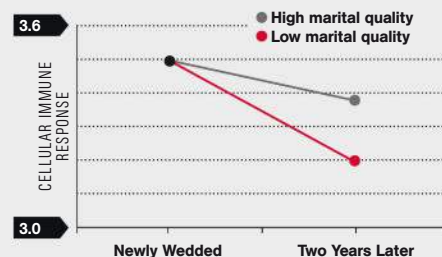


Worse Self-Reported  
Health in Old Age

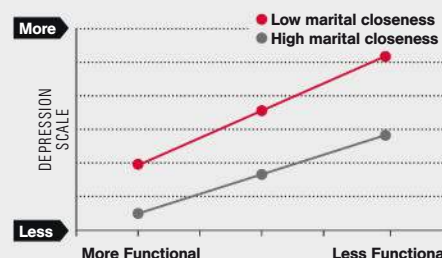


**3.7X** More likely to  
develop a problem  
with alcohol

### Decline in Immune Function



### Increase in Depression







GO OUT TO THE  
MOVIES. THEN  
TALK AFTERWARD.

Ronald Rogge, Ph.D., a professor at the University of Rochester, followed 174 committed couples for three years. Some of the couples received traditional marriage counseling, others received no special attention, and still others were instructed to watch relationship-focused movies each week and talk afterward. Watching flicks and getting counseling both cut the breakup rate by half.

No. 15

COME  
TOGETHER  
ONLY  
HAPPENS ON  
HOLY ROAD  
BECAUSE TAKE  
TURNS

No.  
16

## AUTONOMY IN A RELATIONSHIP IS GOOD

Neither of you should feel that you're being guilty or coerced into choices about the way you live. Researchers at the University of Houston found that couples who feel self-determined instead of trapped are less defensive and more understanding during fights.



### 17/EXPAND YOUR MATE'S IDEA OF YOU TWO...

IN ARUBA. OR ZION NATIONAL PARK. OR QUEBEC CITY. TRAVEL IS A MATE REDEFINER, WHICH MAY BE WHY YOU ENJOY EXUBERANT SEX IN EXOTIC PLACES.

18

KEEP YOUR VOICE  
DOWN WHEN  
YOU FIGHT. IT  
MIGHT SHOCK  
BOTH OF YOU  
INTO BEING MORE  
REASONABLE.

No.  
19



### Banish Boring, Part 1: Do Something Batshit as a Couple

Jet skiing? Hang gliding? Psychologist Arthur Aron, Ph.D., and his colleagues at Stony Brook University and UC Berkeley have found that couples who engage in a novel activity together report much more marital satisfaction than couples who have merely "pleasant" date nights (that is, the same old routine). Okay, it doesn't have to be skydiving, says Aron; "it can be an art class." The point: Bust your rut.



### Banish Boring, Part 2: Do Batshit Things with Another Couple

If you go on a double date and do something new that creates closeness among the four of you, says Aron, you've just quadrupled the excitement level in the room. That thrill is associated with your partner. "And that initial sense of exhilaration that comes from falling in love is reinvigorated," he says. Aron's theory: You're happiest when your mate expands your sense of who you are. So perhaps some time travel is in order. Remember when you two were young and the possibilities seemed limitless? Reengage with friends from that time, preferably ones who've been sweating together (see #8). Then push new boundaries as a group.







## 21

### ASK: HOW MUCH DO I HATE MY WIFE?

Be brutally honest. Oh, you love her? Next question: Why am I so mean to her sometimes? David Schnarch, Ph.D., coined the term “normal marital sadism” to describe the many ways we annoy our spouses on purpose. Stop the purposeful hurts, says Schnarch, and she’ll “like you, want to have sex with you, and wish you well.” Leave the snark and sadism behind, and you’re onto something like the title of Schnarch’s landmark book: *Passionate Marriage*.



### 22/BUY A LAMP TOGETHER (IT'S WORTH IT)

BELOVED, JOINTLY ACQUIRED ITEMS ARE CALLED “COUPLE MARKERS.” THEY’RE A BAROMETER OF YOUR BOND. THEY HELP REPLACE “YOURS” AND “MINE” WITH “OURS.”

## 23

### Your Sacrifices Are Your Gift, Not Her Debt

It’s called having a “communal relationship” with your wife. In such a marriage, sacrifices (yours and hers) are the gifts that keep on giving. Do something nice. Don’t keep score. Both of you benefit.

## 24

### You Know Her— Push the Buttons That Please Her

In her terrific little book *Marriage Rules*, Harriet Lerner, Ph.D., mentions urging a client to come up with three things to do that he knew his wife would appreciate. You can do the same. Get started, smart guy.

## No. 25

### PRACTICAL STUFF CAN WAIT. ATTEND TO HER NOW.

Don’t let the urgent (Bills! The office! The lawn! The Cubs!) get in the way of the important (steps 1 through 24 above). Remember: Your financial, emotional, and physical health depends on a close collaboration with your wife. Make it a priority, or else. Now, care to revise your to-do list?



► **SCREW ME? SCREW YOU!**

When a man is victimized, his fury can overshadow everything else. Learn how to ground yourself.



# REVENGE

You've been wronged, and the only way to right it is to make 'em pay. Before you take that tooth or eye you're owed, understand what's pulling your strings—and when you should pull back.







# “YOU GOTTA GET IT FIXED,” THE REAL ESTATE AGENT TOLD ME.

“But it’s just a small leak,” I said. “A few coats of paint will keep any water stains concealed for months.”

The agent shook her head. “Selling your house with a known but undisclosed defect is against Minnesota state law. Plus, it’s a rotten thing to do.”

Rather than give in to my worst instincts and risk a lawsuit, I sucked it up and paid \$4,000 for a new roof. Ironically, the roof looked so good it started a bidding war that ultimately recouped much more than it cost. Lesson learned, sort of.

From the ethically high-minded Midwest, my family then moved east to a new state where we found a home similar to the one we’d just sold. The owners’ disclosure statement claimed no known “material defects.” Still, the seller’s agent recommended a home inspector buddy just to make sure. I naively figured the agent was doing us a favor.

The following week, I met the inspector at the house. He was a beefy ex-contractor in his mid-30s with a sheaf of credentials. He assured me that nothing would escape his

nationally certified eye. I asked him to pay special attention to the roof. Not to worry, he said, handing me a contract and a bill for services. I forked over \$400, and two weeks later a thick dossier arrived in the mail detailing every nook and cranny of the new house.

The upshot was that, structurally, everything looked good. The roof wasn’t perfect, he conceded, but it had at least 10 years before any significant repairs would be necessary. He also red-flagged a few cosmetic problems but all in all nothing major.

So we bought the place. A week after we moved in, it rained hard and water soon started dripping through the dining room ceiling. By nightfall, old water stains emerged like an angry rash through the fresh paint the previous owner had slapped on. Incensed, I called the inspector, demanding he make things right. Whether he was in cahoots with the seller, I couldn’t tell. But there was no question that he was legally obligated to represent *our* interests. His “inspection” of the roof wasn’t just negligence—it was fraud.

Instead of denying it, he just chuckled. “Read the contract,” he said. “I don’t owe you shit.”

I slammed down the phone. What little of our remaining life savings that had eluded the swindler’s pocket now had to go for a roof to make the place habitable. I didn’t want to buy another roof. I wanted to buy a flamethrower.

## SMITE CLUB

You want to get even, but who’s really going to suffer? That voice in your skull is saying something about men who live by the sword.

**“ANY MAN I SEE OUT THERE, I’M GONNA KILL HIM. ANY SUMBITCH TAKES A SHOT AT ME, I’M NOT ONLY GOING TO KILL HIM BUT I’M GOING TO KILL HIS WIFE, ALL HIS FRIENDS AND BURN HIS DAMN HOUSE DOWN.”**

As much as these incendiary words have stoked my blood over the years, I can’t take credit for them. Nor can the aging outlaw, William Munny, who supposedly first uttered them back in 1881 in the frontier town of Big Whiskey, Wyoming.

Like so many of our culture’s most stirring declarations of revenge, the quote is born of art, not history. Film buffs know Munny as the fictional antihero played by Clint Eastwood in his Oscar-winning Western, *Unforgiven*. Similar protagonists are, of course, legion in the world of drama. From Shakespeare’s Hamlet to Tarantino’s unchained Django, the quest by righteous men to exact revenge is one of literature’s most enduring, and bankable, archetypes.

In real life, schoolyard bullies, girlfriend poachers, scam artists, abusive bosses, scheming slanderers, and a panoply of other backstabbing bastards lie in wait for us all, determined to improve their position at our expense. And when we fall prey to their selfish machinations, who among us hasn’t prayed for Liam Neeson’s *very particular set of skills* in the *Taken* movies to right the wrong in a direct and personal manner?

Blood lust well stoked may even rival the sexual kind for igniting powerful fantasies and triggering an intense need to experience a savagely happy ending. It’s almost as if a thirst for retribution is hardwired into the male psyche.

## How to Master the Mea Culpa

Screwed someone over? Ruin his taste for revenge by delivering a hatchet-burying apology. Evolutionary psychologist Michael McCullough, Ph.D., offers a few pointers.



### ► Clear Your Calendar

When you’re ready to convey your contrition, ask to meet at a place and time convenient for him. By showing respect, you help restore his sense of dignity, says McCullough.



### ► Say What He’s Thinking

At the start of the conversation, admit that you know you were a jerk (or worse) and that you’d be pissed off too, says McCullough. No “buts” or other outs allowed.



### ► Plead 100% Guilty

Even if there is blame to go around, you can’t assign it and apologize at the same time. Make it clear that what happened was in no way his fault, advises McCullough.



### ► Mend Those Fences

Acknowledge that you’ve lost his trust and want to earn it back, says McCullough. First step: Offer to make him whole financially if money or property was involved. —J.T.







**ACTUALLY, THERE'S NO "ALMOST"** about it. A pioneering study published in the journal *Science* in 2004 was among the first to show that the drive to seek out vengeance resides in a specific part of the human brain.

Researchers at the University of Zurich had unsuspecting guys play an economic "game" in the laboratory, all the while monitoring their brains via positron emission tomography (PET) scans. As long as the players cooperated and pooled their resources, each was rewarded with a steadily accumulating pile of cash. What the volunteers didn't know, however, was that the game was rigged.

Although there were multiple rounds of win-win play, in some rounds, a confederate working in cahoots with the researchers betrayed the trust of his partner, enriching himself at the expense of the group. Predictably, this provoked a strong desire for retaliation by the cooperative players, who suddenly realized that the jerk had played them all for suckers.

The researchers then offered each

good guy a chance for payback, explaining he could "punish" the cheater. The PET scans of players with a strong desire to punish displayed an intense surge of activity in an evolutionarily older brain area known as the dorsal striatum. Research has linked the dorsal striatum to reward processing and has also shown that it can be activated by cocaine. No wonder the anticipation of revenge seems so sweet and seductive: Our brain circuitry is designed to find it so.

But how far will we go for this neurochemical hit? In an ingenious twist, the researchers gave the volunteers an opportunity to take revenge, but they would have to pay a price for the pleasure of meting out justice. Each slighted guy could pony up his own money in order to see the cheaters suffer. Despite the cost to themselves, the participants' striata still lit up. Now, however, activity surged in a second brain region as well: the medial prefrontal cortex, or MPFC. This part of the brain is a much newer evolution—one associated with the cognitive evaluation of costs and benefits.

The ancient striatum seems to drive our passion for revenge, while the more recent MPFC raises intellectual doubts about whether it's worth the effort. As helpful as this check-and-balance system can be in guiding the right decision, the two brain regions don't carry equal weight. The researchers found that in the men with high levels of dorsal striatum activation, the appetite for retribution was stronger, overriding the counsel of the rational MPFC.

**NEUROSCIENTISTS AREN'T THE ONLY ONES** WHOSE investigations into the science of revenge have begun encroaching upon, and fundamentally revising, a field long ceded to theologians and moral philosophers. In fact, over the past two decades, researchers in disciplines as disparate as evolutionary biology, criminal justice, social psychology, and even game theory have started to converge on a surprisingly coherent picture of the role revenge plays in our lives.

"To outside observers, revenge today often looks pointlessly destructive," acknowledges psychologist Michael McCullough, Ph.D., the director of the Evolution and Human Behavior Laboratory at the University of Miami. "But the desire to seek revenge is as natural to human beings as grief, happiness, fear, and hunger. The instinct for it has been crafted by natural selection because of the critical problems it solved as our species was evolving."

For our hominid ancestors, these solutions included direct deterrence (if someone harms you or a loved one, retaliation reduces the chance they'll do it a second time); establishing and honing a vengeful rep (those famous for unflinching payback project a clear "Don't tread on me" message that discourages bad actors from even a first offense); and the "moralistic enforcement" of norm violators (punishing cheaters, freeloaders, and other deadbeats makes them pay a price for their selfishness and ideally teaches them to become team players).

Humans are not alone in benefiting from revenge's social solutions. "When you scratch off the veneer of religion and philosophy," says McCullough, "we're finding that revenge works pretty much the same way in many group-living animals, from chimpanzees and crows to wolves and dolphins." For these other highly social species, too, revenge is a necessary tool, one that serves the group by protecting individuals from victimization.

But even the most adaptive of tools can sometimes outlive its usefulness when job requirements change. Unlike wild animals whose group dynamics, preferred habitats, and means of livelihood have evolved little over the millennia, we live under circumstances today that would be unfathomable to our ancestors in the Pleistocene Epoch.

"When 'legitimate' citizens—that is, noncriminals—are wronged in modern societies, there's no need for them to take the law into their own hands," says Volkan Topalli, Ph.D., a professor of criminal justice and criminology at Georgia State University. "Instead, they have an interconnected network of formal remedies available to them."

Ideally, at least, the cops will deal with the bad guy for us, and a judge will assess any civil or criminal penalties he deserves. In best-case scenarios, this allows us to see the offender punished at zero personal risk.

We are, however, deprived of one thing that pissed-off Pleistocene folks enjoyed and that many of us still crave: the visceral pleasure of doling out vengeance directly. Perhaps it's no surprise that not everyone resists this primal call for blood. Some, in fact, will opt for the most extreme form of score settling: Researchers estimate that 10 to 20 percent of all homicides worldwide are motivated by revenge.

**CALL OFF THE WOLVES**

You are the master of your emotions. Keep a leash on revenge, and then try your best to forgive the bastard.

**"Revenge is as natural as hunger."**







**THE MORE I RUMINATED ABOUT HOW I HAD BEEN RIPPED** off by a “certified” professional, the worse I felt—filled with bottomless rage and somehow emasculated too. I tried telling myself that karma would get him in the end. I tried blowing off steam at the gym. Neither strategy worked. So I did what men are supposed to do in civilized society: I called a lawyer.

After reviewing the contract, he pointed out some fine print that absolved the inspector from any negligence claims. “You can sue him,” the lawyer said, “but the contract is clear. You won’t get a dime.”

At this, the veins in my temples must have begun twitching like worms on a hot sidewalk. Noting my reaction, the lawyer said, “Look, it doesn’t make sense for you to pay my hourly rate, but I know one guy who might take your case on a contingency basis. You only pay him if he gets you some money.”

That afternoon, I reached out to this other lawyer—call him Spike—and explained my predicament. “I hate cockroaches,” Spike said. I knew I’d found a champion.

At the hearing a month later, the home inspector showed up with his own lawyer, both of them smirking. The inspector’s lawyer argued that the contract was clear; under no circumstances was his client obligated to pay for any mistakes he may or may not have made. Spike countered that mistakes are different from intentional fraud. Amazingly enough, the judge agreed with Spike and ruled in our favor. He ordered the inspector

to return my \$400 plus half the cost of a new roof.

I feared my jaw might break from beaming. In the short-lived ecstasy that followed, I ventured a quick look in the direction of my nemesis. As the oft-quoted saying goes, “It’s not enough that I succeed—others must fail.” Alas, all hope that the villain’s misery might further stoke my joy evaporated the second I saw his face. His insufferable smirk hadn’t disappeared but rather just seemed smirkier than ever.

“Maybe you ‘won,’” his lawyer said, adding air quotes for emphasis, “but you’ll never collect. My client’s ‘judgment-proof.’” I didn’t know the phrase but instinctively found it loathsome. Spike described the tricks some scammers use to shield their assets. The inspector overheard and openly chortled. The urge to grab his throat was nearly overwhelming.

Spike put his hand on my shoulder. “Don’t worry,” he said. “I haven’t given up.”

Three months later and with no further word from Spike, I figured he finally had. The fraudster’s smirk continued to chase away my sleep and fuel fantasies of less civilized payback.

**MAKING THINGS EVEN WORSE WAS MY SENSE THAT MY NEMESIS WAS NO LONGER** thinking about me at all. The fiscal harm he’d caused was compounded by images of him skipping merrily through life while I remained obsessively waylaid in anger and bitterness.

Transgressors and victims tend to have wholly different interpretations of the amount of damage an injurious act causes. Their “no big deal” can be very big indeed for the wounded party. In a study published in *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, participants were asked to describe times when they’d been victims and victimizers. “When we harm someone else, we tend to downplay it and distance ourselves from the seriousness of our transgression,” says study author Arlene Stillwell, Ph.D. “On the other hand, when we’re harmed in the very same way, we see ourselves as victims of a grave injustice.”

This “magnitude gap” in perception, she argues, makes it very difficult to hit the retaliatory sweet spot wherein both avenger and transgressor agree the punishment fits the crime. “In light of these findings,” says Stillwell, chair of the psychology department at SUNY Potsdam, “it’s understandable why vendettas take place. Both sides come to see themselves as victims, and each seeks an equitable solution. But what one believes to be fair, the other sees as excessive. The result can be an escalating cycle of revenge.”

As my dorsal striatum tantalized with delicious images of me hurling cinder blocks through my enemy’s living room window or turning my new flamethrower on his car, my MPFC questioned whether this would trigger him to retaliate in an even more violent way, putting not just me but my wife and young sons in harm’s way.

Certainly, resisting the urge to pull a William Munny was the sane course of action. For a guy like me, it’s hard to see vigilantism as anything but lunatic—I may not have had much, but I still had too much to lose.

So why did heeding my MPFC leave me feeling so crazed?

Indeed, an influential 1948 report in the *American Journal of Psychoanalysis* was among the first to identify unfulfilled thirst for vengeance as a particularly potent trigger for mental disorders and aggressive outbursts.

“The author argued that this takes over the weak-minded and wreaks havoc on their psyches,” explains McCullough. If not acted upon, it could consume a whole lifetime, leaving you literally sick with bottled-up misery.

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TURMOIL EXPERIENCED BY MYSELF** and others who are equally “weak-minded” would seem to argue for the need to deliver some kind of retributive strike, though not illegal in nature. And of course, of all the pithy platitudes revenge has inspired, none is spouted more frequently than this: Revenge is sweet. But is it really?

In a much cited 2008 study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, researchers from Colgate, Harvard, and the University of Virginia found evidence that revenge may look sweet only in anticipation—that it’s rarely so delectable in execution. “It’s actually fairly common to mispredict the intensity of our future emotions,” explains Timothy Wilson, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at UVA. “But revenge is unusual in that we actually get it backward: People given the chance for payback think it will make them feel good, but most actually feel bad afterward.”

Using a variation on the economic game the researchers in Switzerland had employed, Wilson and his colleagues randomly assigned volunteers to two groups and then arranged for them each to be “stabbed in the back” by a confederate. Those in the “no punish” group were thanked for their service and asked to rate their mood. Those in the “punish” group were asked to predict how good they thought their revenge would feel; then, after they carried it out, they were reinterviewed about the reality.

“In our study,” says Wilson, “we couldn’t find evidence that there was any enjoyment of it. In the group that was

## Retreat from Retribution

Maybe some jerk cut you off on the highway or a colleague cut you out of a plum project. Whatever you’ve suffered, use these tools to help yourself walk (or drive) away from revenge.



### ► Fill Up Your Think Tank

Your brain is 2 percent of your body weight but uses about 20 percent of your daily calories. The MPFC (medial prefrontal cortex), which governs emotion, is especially voracious, says Brad Bushman, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at Ohio State. If the idea of revenge starts to feel irresistible, gulp 4 ounces of fruit juice to send a surge of glucose to your MPFC.



# Payback can make you feel worse.

able to punish, almost everyone's mood and emotions actually declined afterward." The "no punish" group, by contrast, showed no such mood dips.

The researchers found that revenge stokes rather than quenches a person's sense of victimization. "Those given the chance to act revengeful," says Wilson, "tended to keep ruminating about what a jerk the guy was. But those who had no chance to respond found other ways to minimize it and move on." As Sir Francis Bacon noted more than three centuries earlier, "A man that studieth revenge keeps his own wounds green, which otherwise would heal, and do well."

To researcher Mario Gollwitzer, Ph.D., a professor of social psychology at Philipps University of Marburg, Germany, it's not surprising that revenge so rarely feels the way we think it will. His proposed "understanding hypothesis" suggests that revenge has a more complex, functional purpose beyond the mere equalization of suffering. It is, in fact, less concerned with punishing past sins than it is with effecting positive changes in a transgressor's future behavior toward those he's wronged. In a series of studies from 2009 through 2015, Gollwitzer and his colleagues have shown that three ingredients are needed to make revenge "work."

"When the timing is right, the level of retaliation matches the level of the initial provocation, and the harmdoer 'learns' that his behavior was wrong," says Gollwitzer. "Only then do avengers feel satisfied and triumphant about their retaliation."

McCullough agrees, adding that true remorse sets the stage for the next step in repairing a damaged social relationship. "What the human mind really hopes to get from punishment is a positive change in the offender's behavior toward the victim," he says. Once this happens, he maintains, a second adaptive instinct can kick in: forgiveness.

## LAWYER SPIKE CALLED THE MORNING OF CHRISTMAS EVE.

"I got him," he said. "I got the cockroach."

Spike explained that he'd mailed a copy of the judge's ruling to every bank in the state. "I figured he had to have a concealed account *somewhere* to process checks and pay his secretary," Spike said. "And I was right."

In an obscure little bank deep in a rural part of the state, the fraudster had just enough money squirreled away to satisfy the judgment plus Spike's well-earned contingency fee.

"Merry Christmas!" he said.

It had been months since I'd last seen Spike. But in my mind's eye he now looked like a dead ringer for Clint Eastwood in ramrod chaps. I thanked him, hung up, and sped to the mall. What had looked to be our most Dickensian Christmas ever was now, thanks to revenge by proxy, the stuff of a Hallmark TV special. I splurged on presents for my wife and young

## YOUR VENGEFUL BRAIN

In the milliseconds after you've been hurt by someone, a complex series of reactions begin inside your mind that will influence whether you opt for retaliation or restraint.



01

### Dorsal Striatum

When you're unjustly harmed by somebody, the prospect of payback activates this reward-processing region, making revenge seem sweet. It's the primal part of you that suggests coldcocking the creep.

02

### Medial Prefrontal Cortex

The MPFC is your brain's cost-benefit analysis center. When the payback has risks (your enemy is stronger than you, say, or the cops might arrest you), it helps you figure out if getting even is really worth it.

03

### Fronto-Insular and Anterior Cingulate Cortices

These empathy areas light up whenever we see a good person unjustly punished. In men, but not women, these regions remain dark when we witness bad guys get what's due.

04

### Nucleus Accumbens and Orbito-Frontal Cortex

When we see the guilty punished, these two reward-processing centers become activated—more so in men than in women. We actually enjoy the villain's suffering.



#### ► Delay, Relax, Distract

Many guys try to dissipate anger through cathartic acts, like swearing. Save your breath. Bushman says indulging your aggression will fuel the vengeful fire inside. He suggests a three-pronged calming strategy: Delay (count to 100), relax (take some deep breaths and meditate), and distract (work on a puzzle or read).



#### ► Fight Mad with Glad

"It's impossible to experience incompatible emotions at the same time," says Bushman. Petting a dog, helping a friend with a task, kissing your wife—these are all antithetical to anger. "Research has shown since the late '70s that empathy, humor, and mild sexual arousal can all reduce anger," adds psychologist Arlene Stillwell, Ph.D.



#### ► Just Look at Yourself

Ask a stranger whether your rage is rational, and he'll likely say no. But playing the part of the stranger is even more powerful: Be the fly on the wall, says Bushman, and see yourself through the eyes of an objective observer. This helps remove emotion from the equation and shows that revenge won't bring satisfaction. —J.T.



sons, 2 and 6. As for me, no presents necessary: I'd just received the best gift of all—the image of a bastard's smirk turning upside down.

At 9 that night, with the kids finally in bed and gifts wrapped beneath the tree, the phone rang again. My heart sank—I was certain Spike was calling to report that some new legal technicality had arisen. But it wasn't Spike, just an enraged stranger screaming death threats at me. "Who is this?" I asked between his obscenities and invective. "I think you've got the wrong number."

He didn't. It was the home inspector, who'd moments earlier discovered his bank account drained and hit with bounced-check fees.

"How could you do this, you fucking bastard?" he shrieked. I reached over and switched on the digital recorder I use to tape interviews for my job.

"I'm legally required to inform you," I said, trying to keep my voice calm, "that I'm pressing this conversation." Then, with heart pounding, I awaited his next threat.

**THE BURGEONING "POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY"** trend of the late 1990s saw researchers beginning to document how beneficial forgiveness can prove to victims of injustice, allowing them to escape the anger, depression, and anxiety that so often accompany persistent grudges and unrequited revenge. This association, in turn, helped spawn a new form of counseling: "forgiveness therapy"—the focus of McCullough's own early research efforts.

"I was trying to understand what helps people forgive," he says today. "I thought this would be a cool thing to know how to do, something that could maybe even make the world a better place. Many researchers in counseling psychology and social work were trying to figure out how to *make* forgiveness happen."

But by 2000, McCullough began to have doubts about the now deeply entrenched "medical model." If forgiveness is so therapeutic, he wondered, why is it so difficult for so many wronged people to manage? What if forgiveness is not a cure but rather another adaptive trait, one that natural selection has favored because of the social problems it can help solve?

In his book *Beyond Revenge: The Evolution of the Forgiveness Instinct*, McCullough describes

how research by primatologists, anthropologists, and evolutionary biologists began to dovetail on a central conclusion: Just as with the revenge instinct, a forgiveness instinct is not only universal in human groups but also widespread throughout the animal kingdom.

Primatologist Frans de Waal published data indicating that among chimps and other great apes, for instance, friendly behavior, such as kissing, touching, and embracing, is actually more common after aggressive conflicts than in times when everything is copacetic. The same kind of rift mending occurs in goats, sheep, dolphins, and hyenas. "Of all the half dozen or so nonprimate species studied so far," says McCullough, "the only one lacking a conciliatory tendency is the domestic cat, something that will probably come as no surprise to cat owners."

The instinct for forgiveness, however, is hardly indiscriminate. As De Waal's "valuable relationship" hypothesis has shown, wronged individuals don't treat all transgressors equally. After all, it makes no sense to squander energy trying to reform a recidivist villain who either won't improve his treatment of you or has nothing to offer you even if he does. Better to just avoid future contact with him altogether.

But what about an offender who can be taught the error of his ways and who, moreover, has plenty to offer if you can recalibrate his opinion? Within our ancestral groups, a self-centered bully, for instance, might also be a skilled hunter. If you could change his estimation of you, in the process converting him to an ally, the upside potential far outweighs the benefits of killing or maiming him.

It is not an easy trick to pull off. You must earn the offender's respect through displays of anger and a believable willingness to retaliate, convince him there's more upside to having you as a friend than an enemy, and be willing to forgive and forget—if and only if he shows genuine remorse and desire to mend the rift. All the while, you must be keenly aware of signs he's playing you for a sucker.

**ONE OF THE INADVERTENT DRAWBACKS TO MANY** modern justice systems is that they remove the opportunity for direct interpersonal resolution of harms. Even the most sincerely contrite transgres-

sors, for example, are loath to apologize, fearing this will only open them up to greater liability.

When the state does assess civil and criminal penalties on a victim's behalf, it can satisfy some of our desire to see a bad guy punished. But it does little to give us what we've evolved to want most: the kind of resolution that comes only when our transgressors demonstrate true understanding of and contrition for what they have done to us.

This need to make victims truly whole, says McCullough, is one reason the "restorative justice movement" is fast catching on in the United States, Canada, the U.K., and New Zealand. As an adjunct to, not a replacement for, standard criminal justice systems, it's helping many victims accomplish what forgiveness therapy could not bring them: a way to move past their hurt and unresolved anger.

"Restorative justice," says McCullough, "provides a venue where a willing victim can meet face-to-face with a willing offender who wants to offer an apology." The human mind is well-tuned to cues of sincere contrition and self-serving falsehood. But when it detects the former, the impact can be transformative.

"It's what we seem to need," McCullough says, "for true forgiveness and reconciliation to occur."

**FOR NEARLY A MINUTE, I COULD HEAR NOTHING** but silence on the phone line. I wondered if the inspector had gently hung up and was now driving over with a baseball bat. What happened next was the last thing I expected.

"It's Christmas, man," he said, his defeated voice breaking the silence. "I got little kids, and now I can't give them nothing. I can't even pay for heat."

In this pathetic moment, I saw this guy for what he was—not a supervillain, just another garden-variety schmuck of the sort found in every corner of the earth. Schmuckier than me, at least by my estimation, but I could no longer maintain any illusion that we were of separate species. I heard a stifled sob, and at that moment the *joie de revenge* I'd been trying to amplify all day turned sour in my throat. I didn't know what to say, and after five seconds of silence, I just hung up. As Christmas Eve ticked over to the wee hours of the morning, I couldn't sleep, partly because of feelings of guilt, but also due to a building sense of dread that there might be still more twists to come.

That afternoon, I turned over the recording to Spike, who contacted the inspector's lawyer, who must have talked some sense into his client. Any vestigial paranoia about his violent payback gradually faded over the next few months.

In the 19 years since all this transpired, I've neither seen nor heard another word from this man who both wronged me and felt wronged by me. On the rare occasions when I think about his fate, I wish him more good than sorrow. Who knows what, if anything, he might now wish for me? Both of us, I realize today, shared the same instinct for revenge. Perhaps the same holds for forgiveness too. ■

“If forgiveness is therapeutic, why is it so difficult?”



► COLIN FARRELL, CONT. FROM P. 100

related to both, and finally a 2005 stint in rehab for exhaustion, drugs, and drink. "You need to ask for help, and AA is great," he says. That, plus yoga, hiking, and the sauna, has kept him clean ever since. "What most people call success—which is money, fame, fortune, those things—it's all an illusion, and I couldn't handle it at that early stage," he says. "I don't know how Justin Bieber has actually behaved as well as he has. You can get away with anything. It's insane. So you really have to learn."

One lesson came early when, at the age of 11 or 12, he picked the locked box under the bed of his older brother, Eamon. Inside he found magazines like *Gay Times* and *Gay Community News*. "I'd never known anyone to be gay, though I'd certainly heard terms like 'faggot' and 'queer,'" Farrell says. Now it hit home how damaging those words could be, and he felt a wave of compassion. "Nothing about my brother being gay was unnatural or strange to me," he says. "It was just, this is who he is. Being gay was not something he chose any more than being straight was something I chose. All I could do was be there for him and love him."

Eamon was central in Farrell's mind when he took an active, public role in Ireland this year defending same-sex marriage, which was approved by referendum in May. "I think the very nature of life demands that people change," Farrell says. "We have to change in relation to each other and in relation to our environment. But sometimes you have to risk being the example in leading the way."

Being famous can help with that. Farrell has seen a less elevated effect. "Fame is great if you want to get laid," says Farrell, who has been linked to a dozen boldface names. He has a son, James, 11, with model Kim Bordenave, and another, Henry, 5, with his *Ondine* costar Alicja Bachlela.

A friend recently reminded him that he hasn't dated in five years. "As if I'd forgotten," he laughs. "It's not that I don't get lonely sometimes, but I'm okay about it." He notes that the Greeks defined love in different ways; the affection between equals, *philia*; the passion of *eros*; the love for man and God that is *agape*. At this stage, Farrell says, he's focused on *storge*, the type of love a parent feels for his children.

As he puts it in that lyrical way of his, "The most significant aspect of my life lives far away from anywhere that a camera is needed. You play the part and you do interviews, but you don't overextend yourself or put on a mask or change your name. Because when you get home, the only thing that matters is your son is not eating his turkey sandwiches and he's not into avocado anymore, so you have to find something new that he'll eat for lunch." ■

► TACO, CONT. FROM P. 95

The taco's roots are ancient. Smoking meats over fire or subduing them slowly over time in a sauce—this is what the ancients of Mesoamerica did. It's no wonder that these methods, time-tested over centuries, would produce the most satisfying fillings.

**THERE ARE CERTAIN INALIENABLE TRUTHS** in Mexico City. The smog is a permanent low-lying cloud. Unlicensed cabs are a menace. And great salsa is everywhere.

One night I stop at a street cart for a night-cap taco, drawn by the aroma of sizzling longaniza, a rich, spicy sausage. On the cart, free for generous spooning, is a massive bowl of green salsa—a mixture of ground tomatillos, onions, cilantro, and avocado. I'm full from dinner, but the salsa is a jaw lubricant, its fresh acidity and liveliness making it possible for me to enjoy another bite, and then another.

Most taco slingers in Mexico City are pressed for time and mindful of their overhead. But salsa ingredients—chiles, tomatoes, onions, tomatillos, and cilantro—are abundant and cheap, and a big batch can be produced quickly. So salsa is a universal resource, the rising tide that lifts all tacos.

Up north, we don't have the same quality produce they have in Mexico. But oven-roast those pale, hydroponic tomatoes, and their sugars caramelize and they become delicious. Rehydrated chiles don't have the potency of fresh ones, so they need some heat therapy too, to help sharpen their flavors. Sometimes method matters more than ingredients.

**ON MY NEXT-TO-LAST NIGHT IN MEXICO CITY**, I learn that the taco trinity comes with an asterisk. I meet my friend Martin at Dulce Patria in the fashionable Polanco neighborhood. Tacos are not primary to chef Martha Ortiz's vision, but she makes a damn good chilorio taco. The finger-sized tortilla is filled with a slow-simmered pork cooked in chile sauce, mixed with pápaloquelite (an herb that tastes a little like cilantro and a little like arugula) and then rolled and fried. But what makes this taco special is its garnish: a thin slice of pickled red onion. Pinkish-purple, it tastes of beets, with a slightly sweet acidity that lances the richness of the fried pork.

It occurs to me that everywhere I've gone in Mexico City, every taco I've eaten has been splashed with acid. When I ask Escalante about the role of acid in the taco, he brightens. His student is finally catching on.

When a taco is done right, you have a meal that satisfies in the deep, primal way of pig roasts and roadside barbecue and, paradoxically, makes you crave it more and more.

To hell with gringo tacos. It's time to make a taco that rings true. ■

# Men'sHealth

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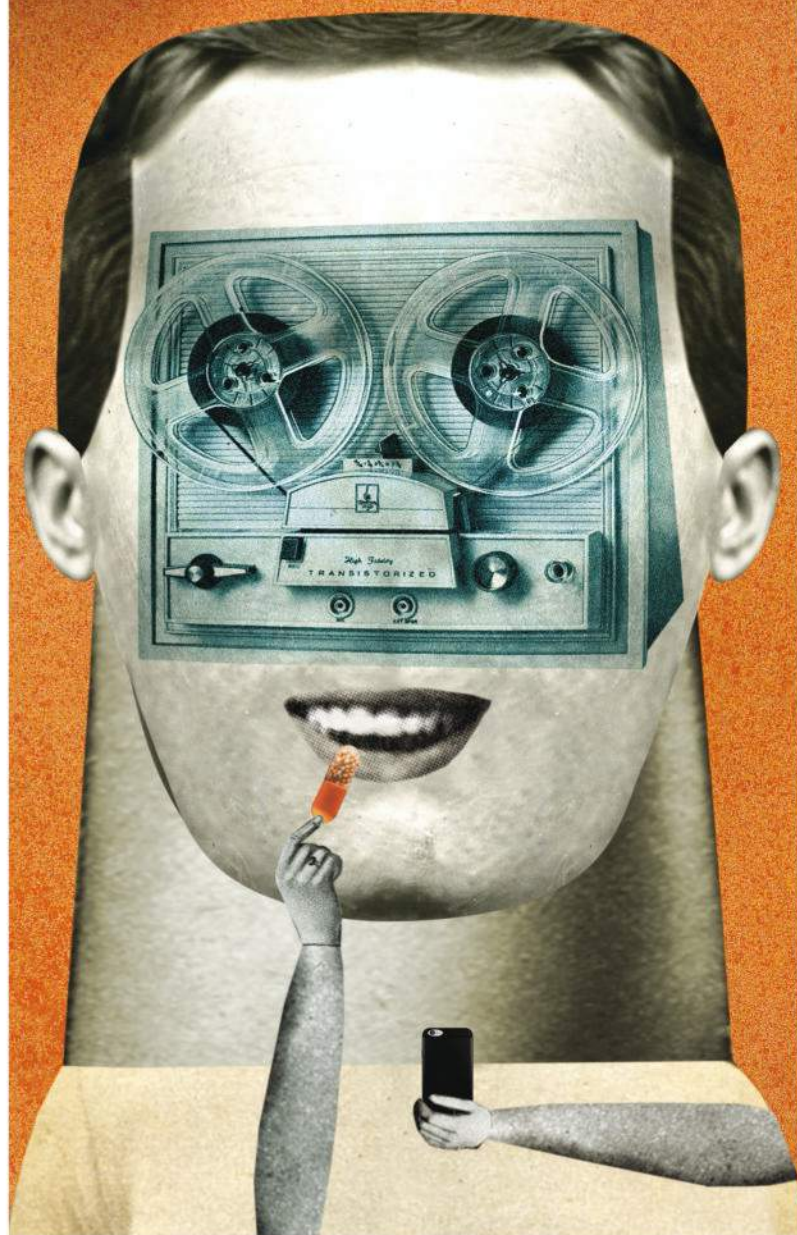


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**REEL TO REAL**  
After Apple Watch,  
let's cut right  
to iBrain and be  
done with it.

## GUY LIST



# 17 Inventions We Need Now

Driverless cars and wearable tech? Fine. But we'd pay big bucks for certain inventions inspired by everyday hassles and random musings.

BY STEVE CALECHMAN

### PLEASE INVENT...

Plasma screens on the backs of big trucks so we can catch the game when stuck in traffic.

True superfoods. The power of flight would be nice—or at least the ability to answer emails while sleeping.

**Car-wash blowers at the gym shower exit.**

Singles-only jury duty. Throw in a bowling alley and voilà: waiting lists. ("Your honor, we need to be sequestered.")

**Short-term memory app. Records your day and reminds you if you took your vitamin this morning.**

Exchangeable first-aid items. Let us trade in 50 unused tiny Band-Aids for 20 regulars.

**Automatic parking garage spot locator.**

Fitted sheets with directional arrows.

And with that, a mattress that hovers.

**Express lane at the doctor's office. When the five-minute buzzer goes off, you're done—even if the bleeding isn't.**

Hamster-size bears. All that cute ferocity, none of the midnight garbage can raids.

A DVR that detects rain delays and overtime.

**Scariest incentives on cardio machines.**

**Pixelated peaks? Please. Chase us with a snarling jaguar.**

Hologram concerts. It'd be nice to know how Hendrix would have adapted to a kitchen-counter stage.

The Spoiler Block. Until you've watched the game or episode, all texts, tweets, posts, and crawls are scrubbed.

**A boot-sizing sensor. When the fit is right, the light goes on.**

High-beam brake lights for the prick on your tail.

### DRY OFF LIKE AN OLYMPIAN

No towel service at your gym? A chamois, like the ones used by Olympic and professional divers, wicks up water well and wrings out quickly. Microfiber towels, which come in many sizes, are nearly as good; they're thin and will fit easily in your gym bag. Ginger Huber, professional diver with the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series

### DO A READ-THROUGH

If you need to remember something tomorrow, say it out loud or to yourself several times. ("After I get coffee, buy her card.") Then form a visual image of actually doing it. Not only does this force you to pay attention, but linking the task to a daily activity cements it without relying on notes that you'll undoubtedly forget.

Mark McDaniel, Ph.D., principal investigator at the Memory and Complex Learning Lab, Washington University in St. Louis

### ZIG WHEN THEY ZAG

Some parking structures and lots now have signs directing you to available spots. Until they all do, look near an exit. Or, if the structure's design is funneling you up, cut across and try going down.

Andy Miller, consultant with Carl Walker, a parking design firm

### BE PRECISE ABOUT PAIN

If you (or, more likely, your doctor) are pressed for time, report exactly what you were doing when the hurt hit. He or she can unravel the mystery from there, easing the psychic pain of all your frantic Google searching.

Paul Casey, M.D., emergency physician at Rush University Medical Center

### WATCH WHILE YOU WORK

Do "television intervals." On a stationary bike or treadmill, exercise at a perceived rate of exertion of 5. But when the commercials come on, hammer it up to 9 or 10.

Ted King, professional cyclist with Cannondale-Garmin Pro Cycling

### STROLL AROUND THE STORE

Forget your shoe size: Boots can differ by a size and a half. And even if they feel fine right away, walk awhile to check for pinching or rubbing. You'll wear them for years—it's worth a few minutes.

Billy Lovell, product developer at Justin Brands

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PLUNKERT



**AMERICA**  
**CAN'T BE GREAT**  
**ON AN**  
**EMPTY**  
**STOMACH.**

1 IN 6 AMERICANS STRUGGLES WITH HUNGER.  
UNITE AND FIGHT TO END HUNGER IN AMERICA AT

**GREATNATIONSEAT.ORG** 



**Men'sHealth**



A full-page photograph of actor Colin Farrell. He is standing in a forest, leaning against a large, weathered wooden log on the left. He is wearing a dark olive-green jacket over a white t-shirt, dark trousers, and dark leather boots. He is also wearing a dark fedora hat and has a chain necklace. His right hand is raised to his forehead, and his left hand is in his pocket. The background shows tall pine trees and a grassy clearing.

**Men'sHealth**

# **FALL 2015**

# **GUIDE**

# **TO STYLE**

CREATIVE.  
RUGGED. SOPHISTICATED.  
THREE LOOKS EVERY MAN  
MUST MASTER

Colin Farrell wears a 7 for All Mankind jacket,  
J Brand shirt, Gilded Age pants, and Frye boots.





YOU MIGHT NOT NEED IT.

BUT CAN YOU LIVE WITHOUT IT?

*zoom-zoom*





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# FALL 2015 GUIDE TO STYLE

Your clothes tell a story about the kind of man you are.  
Keep these simple, versatile looks on hand to make your statement memorable.



## CREATIVE

Have a look all your own  
and show that you're thinking  
a step ahead of the next guy  
with these A-list touches.

P. 4



## RUGGED

Everything you need to  
quietly convey that you're a man  
with grit—by the campfire or  
in the conference room.

P. 12



## SOPHISTICATED

When life calls for extra polish,  
these wardrobe flourishes  
will show everyone that you're  
ready to shine.

P. 24

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Photograph by DEAN ISIDRO

Cover photograph by MATTHIAS VRIENS-McGRATH





# **THROW AWAY THE SCRIPT**

CREATIVITY IS THE  
FIRST KEY TO  
A LOOK THAT'S ALL YOURS.  
LET COLIN FARRELL  
SHOW YOU THE WAY.

Photographs by MATTHIAS VRIENS-McGRATH

J.LINDBERG coat, \$850 · 7 FOR ALL MANKIND jacket, \$378  
RAG & BONE shirt, \$125 · KENNETH COLE NEW YORK pants, \$98  
THE FRYE COMPANY boots, \$348







## EXPAND YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Best known for his roles as rogue and rebel, Colin Farrell is a natural as the face of Dolce & Gabbana's Intenso cologne. But he doesn't obsess over high fashion. "I grew up in a working-class environment, so practicality was what mattered," says Farrell. He's loyal to his Dublin roots and to the brands that fit him best. "I like clothing that's comfortable and very well structured."

DOLCE & GABBANA jacket, \$4,175 • JUNK FOOD CLOTHING CO. T-shirt, \$36  
CITIZENS OF HUMANITY jeans, \$248 • THE FRYE COMPANY boots, \$348



HIT THE RIGHT TONE  
MUCH LIKE BLACK,  
WHITE, AND TAN, OLIVE  
AND TAUPE ARE NEUTRAL  
AND USEFUL. YOU CAN  
WEAR THESE HUES WITH  
ALMOST ANYTHING.

USE COLLAR I.D.  
THE BANDED COLLAR  
IS THE IDEAL SHAPE TO  
FRAME SHIRT COLLARS  
AND TURTLENECKS.

BE A CLOSER  
THESE CUFFS HELP  
MOTORCYCLISTS  
SLICE THROUGH THE  
WIND. CLOSE YOURS  
TO ACHIEVE A SLEEKER,  
SHARPER LOOK.

## THE ESSENTIAL

# Leather Jacket

Traded your Harley for a Prius? That's cool. A slim leather jacket lends attitude to your wardrobe without making you seem like a poser. "An updated moto-bomber combines sexiness and sportiness," says Dan Trepanier, creative director at Articles of Style. And it's versatile enough to wear over a button-down and tie or a T-shirt. Forgo flashy details like studs and logos. Instead, lean toward neutral colors and textures, and subtle combinations like gray and suede. Armani Exchange, \$550

**THREE WAYS  
TO WEAR IT**  
FEW WARDROBE  
ITEMS CAN TURN  
FROM REBELLIOUS  
TO REGRETTABLE  
FASTER THAN A  
LEATHER JACKET.  
HEED THESE RULES  
TO PULL IT OFF.

1



"The fit and quality of the leather are key," Trepanier says. Yours should be as fitted as a tailored suit jacket.

2



Avoid bold contrasts. A fine-gauge sweater in a similar neutral tone will always look subtle and refined.

3



A slim, textured knit tie keeps the maverick attitude intact, while a wide tie would quickly take you from cool to tool.

FIND A  
WATCH  
THAT MAKES  
YOU TICK



**Bold and Free-Spirited**  
Show the world you even rebel against chronological order. Nixon Ranger 45 Leather, \$175



**Serious and Sporty**  
The face is all business, the strap party-ready. Maurice Lacroix Pontos S Orange, \$4,500



**Meticulous and Discerning**  
The natural strap, green dial, and orange details say so. Shinola The Runwell Chronograph, \$750



**Active and Outgoing**  
This diver is water-resistant up to 200 meters. Bulova Marine Star, \$499



**Cool and Quiet**  
An understated design can still make a big impression. Nautica, \$210





**Greenwich Bike**  
Automatic gearing—and virtually no maintenance!  
\$1,100, martonecycling.com



**Tumi Carry-On**  
Camo sets you apart from the suits with the black bags.  
\$695, tumi.com



**Diptyque Diffuser**  
Subtly spice up the room with a soft ginger scent.  
\$150, diptyqueparis.com



**Ross & Brown Shades**  
Tortoiseshell works with suits as well as casual tees.  
\$135, rossandbrown.com



**West Elm Sculpture**  
3D art makes a statement—and starts conversations.  
\$79, westelm.com

## SPARK YOUR INSPIRATION

Actors like Colin Farrell are constantly in search of artistic fuel. "Creativity manifests itself in subtle choices," says designer Alexander Olch. "Over time, you begin to appreciate the well-made things that break from convention." Your originality starts here.



**Esquivel Brogues**  
They're exquisitely crafted, with hand-painted detailing.  
\$725, esquivelshoes.com

**Bally Bag**  
Buck the boring leather briefcase trend.  
\$995, bally.com



**Harman Kardon Aura**  
It's part speaker, part sculpture.  
\$400, harmankardon.com



**2016 Mercedes GLE SUV**  
The Benz's classic body will never look dated.  
Starting at \$51,100, mbusa.com



## Three Creative Ways to Make Any Look Cooler

The American designer MICHAEL KORS is best known for his aviator shades and his love of Palm Springs style. As most guys reach for boring flannels and heavy jackets, we asked the fashion icon to share a few of his favorite moves to liven things up.

### SCORE YOUR FIRST DOWN

A down parka is your best defense against plummeting temps. Fur trim instantly reads both luxe and practical. "Pull up the hood and you don't need to deal with a hat," says Kors.

### TAKE A FEW GAMBLER

If you usually dress conservatively, try rock 'n' roll accents, suggests Kors. One easy way is to incorporate a subtle leopard print into a traditional piece like a tie or a weekend bag.

### GET HOOKED ON A FEELING

A textural knit like a chunky cardigan or fisherman's sweater is a force multiplier worth picking up for the fall, Kors says. "It'll make the rest of your look more interesting."



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## MESS WITH THE CLASSICS

Actors feel pressure to look polished, but Farrell found a subtle way to rebel. "I had a big old leather pair of boots," he says. "And I wore them every day for about 10 years." Personal and vintage touches like that can help you own your look. Experiment with a classic shape—like this tailored topcoat—but in an understated pattern. Or mix unexpected pieces like a vintage concert tee under a more traditional jacket.

MICHAEL KORS coat, \$695 • JUNK FOOD CLOTHING CO. T-shirt, \$26  
7 FOR ALL MANKIND JEANS, \$218



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NAUTICA





# ESCAPE THE BEATEN PATH

LEAVING THE CITY?  
GOOD CALL. NOW PACK  
THE CLOTHES AND GEAR  
THAT WILL WORK HARD  
WHILE YOU RELAX.

Photographs by DEAN ISIDRO

DENIM & SUPPLY RALPH LAUREN vest, \$165  
SPLENDID MILLS shirt, \$88 • CHIP FOSTER jeans, \$225  
SZANTO watch, \$325









### Local Knives

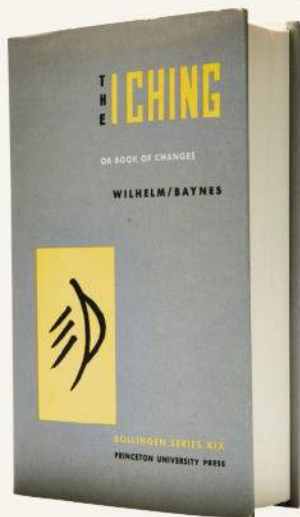
"I seek out knives on my trips abroad. They say a lot about the culture and traditions, and I treasure them."



### Sony RX100 Point-and-Shoot

"On hikes with my family, I bring this simply designed, high-quality camera. It's easy to use, and it has a Zeiss lens." \$450, [sony.com](http://sony.com)

**The Shark's Fin, Meru Peak**  
"This first ascent pushed the team physically, mentally, and creatively. How rare is it to do something no one has ever done?"



### The I Ching

"I carry my battered copy everywhere. It can provide helpful wisdom when things seem to be going sideways."



### Revo Bearing Sunglasses

"Good eyewear is essential on mountains. These provide protection without distortion." \$189, [revo.com](http://revo.com)

## ELEVATE YOUR ADVENTURE

There are very few risks that National Geographic lensman Jimmy Chin won't take to nail the perfect shot. His new film, Meru, chronicles the first successful ascent of a 21,000-foot Himalayan peak. "Everything is focused on the 3 feet in front of you for 18 days," he says. Here's what guides him.



### The North Face ThermoBall Jacket

"Nothing beats a good insulated jacket in cold, wet weather, whether you're on a peak or in the city." \$199, [thenorthface.com](http://thenorthface.com)



### Galen Rowell

"He was one of the original participatory expedition photographers. He didn't just shoot from the outside. He was a visionary."



### The North Face Men's Verto Approach II

"The sticky rubber on these is great for when I'm on the trails and peaks around Jackson Hole." \$120, [thenorthface.com](http://thenorthface.com)



### Jetboil Flash Cooking System

"On Meru, it made fast work of our couscous and oatmeal. We also ate lots of salami and chocolate." \$100, [jetboil.com](http://jetboil.com)





# SAIL IT LIKE YOU STOLE IT.

Sperry, the original boat shoe. Worn by intrepid souls since 1935. See the whole collection at [sperry.com](http://sperry.com)

ODYSSEYS AWAIT



**SPERRY**  
Since 1935



A man with short dark hair and a light beard is smiling and looking off-camera to his right. He is wearing a brown quilted vest over a blue chambray shirt and tan corduroy pants. He holds a wooden stick in his right hand. The background is a blurred forest scene with green foliage and rocks.

## STAND UP TO THE SEASON

Corduroy adds both texture and dimension to your wardrobe and pairs as easily as denim, says Doug Conklyn, chief creative officer for Dockers. A classic chambray shirt like this one is a perfect utility player—it's warmer and more durable than knit cotton, and less likely to snag when you're out for a hike.

SPLENDID MILLS vest, \$198 • 34 HERITAGE shirt, \$145  
CITIZENS OF HUMANITY pants, \$208 • WILL LEATHER GOODS belt, \$85



# YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS



Photographed under controlled conditions. Do not attempt.

## TOUGH TRUCK TIRES



WILDPEAK A/T



WILDPEAK H/T



WILDPEAK M/T  
COMING SOON

Sierra Blair-Coyle @sierrablaircoyl  
Professional Rock Climber



**WILDPEAK**

WILDPEAK Tough Truck Tires take you everywhere a new experience awaits, with confidence and comfort.

**FALKEN**  
TIRE  
ON THE PULSE



**AVOID THE CHILLS**  
THE GOOSE DOWN INSULATION HELPS REGULATE YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE.

**DRESS IT UP**  
LOOK FOR A FABRIC LIKE WOOL, SUEDE, OR TWEED TO TURN YOUR EVERYDAY WINTER WARMER INTO A STYLE STATEMENT.

**CONCEAL YOUR CORDS**  
CONNECT YOUR HEADPHONES THROUGH AN INTERIOR AUDIO PORT TO KEEP YOUR LOOK STREAMLINED.



**THE ESSENTIAL**

# Down Vest

A thin down vest balances function and flair, says Dan Trepanier, creative director at Articles of Style. It's a great transitional piece between seasons. Wear it over a suit jacket or under an overcoat for added warmth without bulk. This navy blue option eliminates the sporty sheen you typically find on nylon puffers. "The real secret is to size down," says Trepanier. "A puffer vest should fit as close to the body as possible without being too tight or restrictive, especially if you wear it with tailored clothing." Aether Apparel Drift Vest, \$295



## Give Your Home an Edge

New York designer **TODD SNYDER** says a few retro touches can help punch up your pad. Find items that speak to you at these throwback troves.



**ANTIQUE STORES**

Don't worry if your place is modern. "It's intriguing to mix old and new designs," Snyder says. No antique stores nearby? Check out [1stdibs.com](http://1stdibs.com). "It's great for when you don't have time to wander."



**INTERNATIONAL MARKETS**

Snyder likes **ABC Carpet & Home** in New York City and **Galerie Half** in L.A. "They find stuff I didn't know I wanted," Snyder says, and then design a whole room around it.



**RARE AND USED BOOK DEALERS**

Vintage books make interesting set pieces, Snyder says. Estate sales can also yield treasures. And who knows? Crack open those books and you could be as interesting as your decor.

Styling: Yolande Gagnier (vest), iStock (chair, bowl), Vasiliki Varvaki/Getty Images (books), MATTHEW COOK (illustrations)

## THREE WAYS TO WEAR IT

VESTS ARE ALL ABOUT VERSATILITY. THIS TRIO OF OPTIONS CAN HELP YOU EMBRACE THE FULL RANGE OF THIS CLASSIC LAYERING PIECE.

**1**



A flannel shirt under a vest provides warmth and durability while also adding an edgy hit of pattern and texture.

**2**



You'll move easier in layers than with one bulky coat. Plus, you can add or subtract layers as temps change.

**3**



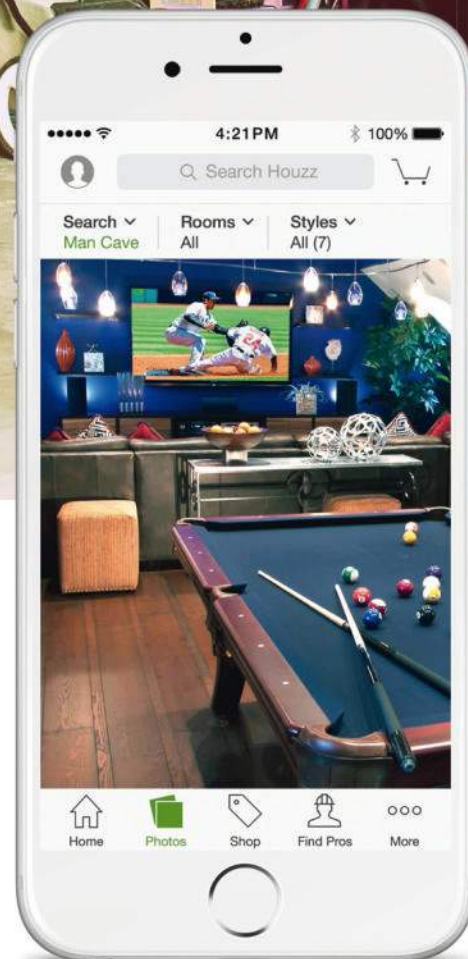
For dressier occasions, choose a vest with a slimmer profile, and steer clear of bright colors and sporty nylon.



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## Epic Man Cave

If you can look at what is and imagine what could be, Houzz can help. Hire a professional, get ideas and shop thousands of products. So, whether you're looking to renovate or redecorate, Houzz has everything you need to improve your home. **Get started now.**





A man and a woman are standing on a rocky, sandy shore. The man, in the foreground, is wearing a red, orange, and black plaid flannel shirt with the sleeves rolled up and dark blue jeans. He is looking back over his shoulder at the camera with a slight smile. The woman, behind him, has long reddish-brown hair and is wearing a white sweater. They are both looking out towards a body of water in the background. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. The rocks are dark and jagged, and the water is calm with some ripples.

## **HIT REFRESH ON A FAVORITE**

An all-American flannel shirt is cozy and versatile, says menswear designer Alexander Olch. "It can be formal and casual at the same time." Wear it with a tie and jacket, under a sweater, or by itself with the sleeves rolled up. Thick, high-quality fabric will provide the greatest utility. Go for bold plaids or checks in autumnal hues like red, black, and orange (we like Filson's colors) for a timeless look.

FILSON SHIRT, \$135 • ORIGINAL PENGUIN PANTS, \$89



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----- Est. 1889 -----

# COMFORT & LOOKS ARE FINALLY ON THE SAME TEAM

*Mike Golic*  
MIKE GOLIC

*Mike Greenberg*  
MIKE GREENBERG



PREMIUM FABRIC • MORE FLEXIBLE • SOFTER AND STRONGER  
**COMFORT NEVER LOOKED SO GOOD**

New Lee jeans are available at **JCPenney®**, **JCPenney.com** and **Lee.com**



### Crate and Barrel Bar10der

It has 10 handy mixology tools, including a zester, strainer, and jigger. The muddler extends 15 inches. Booze, unfortunately, is sold separately. \$40, [crateandbarrel.com](http://crateandbarrel.com)

## GAIN AN EDGE

Despite all the efforts of Silicon Valley, there's still no source code for removing splinters, pulling out rusty deck nails, or dicing onions at your campsite picnic table. For real-world problems, you need real-world solutions. These multitools can transform you from the guy asking for help to the guy offering it.

### SOG SwitchPlier 2.0

It has all the functionality you'd expect from a multitool, with one trick upgrade: Hit the button on the handle and the spring-loaded pliers pop open. \$64, [sognives.com](http://sognives.com)

### Kaufmann Mercantile EDC Kit

This keychain rig has a 2-inch pry bar, a lighter, tweezers, and two screwdrivers—all steel and sturdy as hell. Add more: The whole swinging toolbox is customizable. \$54, [kaufmann-mercantile.com](http://kaufmann-mercantile.com)

### Victorinox Traveller Lite

The classic pocket knife, with an arsenal of high-tech extras, including an altimeter, barometer, and thermometer. \$195, [swissarmy.com](http://swissarmy.com)

## THE BOOTS TO CONQUER ANY OBSTACLE



### To a Board Meeting

The premium leather looks as welcome as your wingtips. Bally, \$750



### Through the Snow

All the grip and insulation you need to arrive safely. Cole Haan, \$298



### Over the Rocks

The Vibram rubber outsole is designed to take a beating. Eddie Bauer, \$160



### In the Pouring Rain

As iconic as a boat shoe, and even better at keeping you dry. Sperry, \$155



### On the Trail

A versatile design makes this choice an all-season winner. Timberland, \$195



A man with short dark hair and a light beard is sitting on a rock. He is wearing a thick, beige cable-knit turtleneck sweater with a complex geometric pattern. He is also wearing dark brown trousers and dark brown leather boots. His hands are clasped in his lap. The background is a blurred natural setting with rocks and foliage.

## UPGRADE YOUR CABLE

"I've always been a fan of chunky wool sweaters, like cable knits," says Conklyn. Rule of thumb: The thicker the sweater, the more casual it is; the heft is what makes it look rugged. This wool-and-alpaca version helps regulate your body temperature while feeling soft to the touch, and it works with both trousers and jeans. Lighter, fine-gauge pieces will look great under a tailored jacket.

BOSS sweater, \$375 • TODD SNYDER pants, \$250  
FLORSHEIM LIMITED boots, \$175

For more info on these items, see page 30.



# **TAKE THE ROAD TO REFINEMENT**

WHEN THE MOMENT CALLS  
FOR YOU TO SHIFT TO A HIGHER GEAR,  
MAKE SURE YOUR EQUIPMENT  
IS BUILT TO HANDLE THE VELOCITY.

Photographs by DEAN ISIDRO



CALVIN KLEIN COLLECTION suit, \$1,295 • IZOD shirt, \$50  
JOHN VARVATOS coat, \$1,898 • HAN KJØBENHAVN sunglasses, \$180  
GENERAL KNOT & CO. pocket square, \$42  
SHINOLA watch, \$750 • URI MINKOFF bag, \$375







## SUIT UP FOR THE LONG RUN

Even if the old-school styles aren't for you, look for quality suits with classic, well-tailored silhouettes and luxury fabrics that will stand the test of time, advises Luis Fernandez, creative director of the menswear label CraftAtlantic.

BONOBOS suit, \$740 • MMK shirt, \$75 • TO BOOT NEW YORK shoes, \$395  
VINCE CAMUTO tie, \$70 • THE TIE BAR tie bar, \$15  
GENERAL KNOT & CO. pocket square, \$42





#### Eton Dress Shirts

"I love the sensibility of Eton. They have great accent details and memorable colors and fabrics." \$265, [etonshirts.com](http://etonshirts.com)



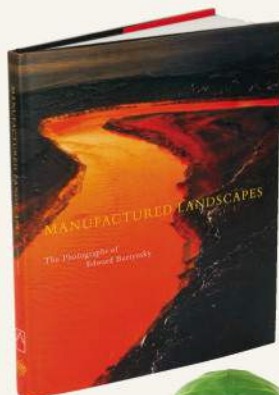
#### Imogene + Willie Jeans

"American-made, not fussy, not contrived. They're what denim is supposed to be." \$250, [imogeneandwillie.com](http://imogeneandwillie.com)



## DESIGN YOUR LIFE

Designer Eric Villency has built an enviable portfolio over the years, counting Delta, W Hotels, and Mercedes-Benz among his firm's clients. To oversee his various projects, Villency travels up to 100 days a year. These are the people, places, and things that left the deepest impression.



#### Edward Burtynsky

"His photos reveal how things are made. He can find beauty in a factory."



#### Scandinavian Design

Villency is fond of Swedish products like Stutterheim raincoats, Tiger of Sweden underwear, and Sandqvist bags. \$368, [stutterheim.com](http://stutterheim.com)



#### High-Speed Rail

"It's new, clean, quiet, fast, and stress-free. You get to work while you see the countryside in places like Japan, China, and Taiwan."



#### Prada Shoes

"They're comfortable and modern, with durable soles and classic silhouettes." \$1,150, [prada.com](http://prada.com)



#### High-End Earbuds

"I like Thinksound, a small, eco-friendly New Hampshire company. The wood finish on my pair is great." \$75+, [thinksound.com](http://thinksound.com)



#### Vintage Radios

"I collect vintage 1940s Emerson Tube radios. They're beautifully made, with warm, bright sound."



#### IWC Watches

"They are mechanically excellent, not too big or over the top. I like their aviation heritage. You can wear one with jeans or a suit." IWC Portofino Automatic watch \$4,700, [iwc.com](http://iwc.com)



#### Yves Béhar

"Yves designs buildings, furniture, and objects, and he's successful in every area. He's also very good at collaborations. Good design is a team effort on the commercial scale, and each project makes sense for what it is. Two of his projects that I really like are the Jambox speaker and the Whole World Water bottle."



**RESPECT THE NECK**  
MAKE SURE COLLAR  
STYLES MATCH. V-NECK  
SWEATERS LOOK BEST  
WITH V-NECK TEES.

**STEAL A BRIGHT IDEA**  
A BOLD SWEATER IS THE  
PERFECT FOIL FOR A  
WHITE SHIRT AND GRAY  
TROUSERS. CHOOSE  
A COLOR THAT MAKES  
YOU HAPPY.

**QUIT THE BAND**  
A STYLE THAT'S TOO  
CINCHED AT THE WAIST  
JUST EMPHASIZES YOUR  
BELLY. KEEP THE BOT-  
TOM OF THE SWEATER  
FLAT, NOT FITTED.

**THE ESSENTIAL**

# Cashmere Sweater

Fair warning: Cashmere is the first-class cabin of fibers—once you've tried it, you'll have trouble going back to wool. But it's more than just an indulgence. "Cashmere is extremely breathable," says Jenny Ricker, a stylist who works with actors such as Jon Hamm and Zac Efron. "You don't need an undershirt, since it's not hot or itchy." Go with a V-neck style—that's the most versatile option to wear alone or with a suit jacket. And don't pair it with a crisp dress shirt, Ricker advises. "That'll look too formal under a soft knit." Uniqlo sweater, \$90

**THREE WAYS  
TO WEAR IT**  
A CASHMERE  
SWEATER IS ONE  
OF THE WISEST  
INVESTMENTS  
A MAN CAN MAKE.  
USE THESE LOOKS  
TO SHOW OFF YOUR  
GOOD TASTE.



**1**  
A medium thickness is a good casual choice. "Superthin can be revealing, and thick weights look chunky," Ricker says.



**2**  
If you're layering, avoid shirts with bulky pockets. They'll show through the sweater and distract from your look.



**3**  
To dress it up, a point collar works well with the sweater's neck, and a two-button jacket complements the V shape.

**TURN  
A TIE GAME  
INTO  
A WIN**



**Giving a Presentation**  
Bonobos shirt, \$168  
The Tie Bar tie, \$19



**Dining Out After Work**  
Boss shirt, \$165  
Corridor NYC tie, \$95



**Interviewing for a Job**  
Van Heusen Studio shirt, \$50  
Alexander Olch tie, \$150



**Pitching New Business**  
Vince Camuto shirt, \$90  
William Rast tie, \$50



**Meeting a First Date**  
Alexander Olch shirt, \$320  
The Tie Bar tie, \$25



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thank you.

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## Fall Style Sources

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aetherapparel.com

**Alexander Olch**  
nordstrom.com

**Armani Exchange**  
armanisexchange.com

**Bally**  
bally.com

**Banana Republic**  
bananarepublic.com

**Bonobos**  
bonobos.com

**Boss**  
hugoboss.com

**Bulova**  
bulova.com

**Calvin Klein Collection**

Calvin Klein  
Collection stores

**Chip Foster**  
chipfoster.com

**Citizens of Humanity**  
citizensofhumanity.com

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denimandsupply.com

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eddiebauer.com

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hankjobenhavn.com

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jbrandjeans.com

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jlindebergusa.com

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johnvarvatos.com

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junkfoodclothing.com

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**Black Label**  
kennethcole.com

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kennethcole.com

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**Nixon**  
nixon.com

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originalpenguin.com

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perryellis.com

**Rag & Bone**  
rag-bone.com

**7 for All Mankind**  
7forallmankind.com

**Shinola**  
shinola.com

**Sperry**  
zappos.com

**Splendid Mills**  
splendid.com

**Szanto**  
longislandwatch.com

**The Frye Company**  
thefryecompany.com

**The Tie Bar**  
thetiebar.com

**34 Heritage**  
34heritage.com

**Timberland**  
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**Todd Snyder**  
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**Uniqlo**  
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**Uri Minkoff**  
rebeccaminkoff.com/  
ben-minkoff

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**Vince Camuto**  
vincecamuto.com

**Will Leather Goods**  
willleathergoods.com

**William Rast**  
lordandtaylor.com

## BREAK RULES, TURN HEADS

Use accessories and surprising layers to set yourself apart. Swap your shirt and tie for a relaxed turtleneck and lapel flower, says Fernandez. "You'll still fit in, but these subtle differences will reveal sophistication and originality."

BANANA REPUBLIC suit, \$568 • PERRY ELLIS shirt, \$125

KENNETH COLE BLACK LABEL shoes, \$395

MORGENTHAL FREDERICKS sunglasses, \$1,195 • THE TIE BAR lapel pin, \$8



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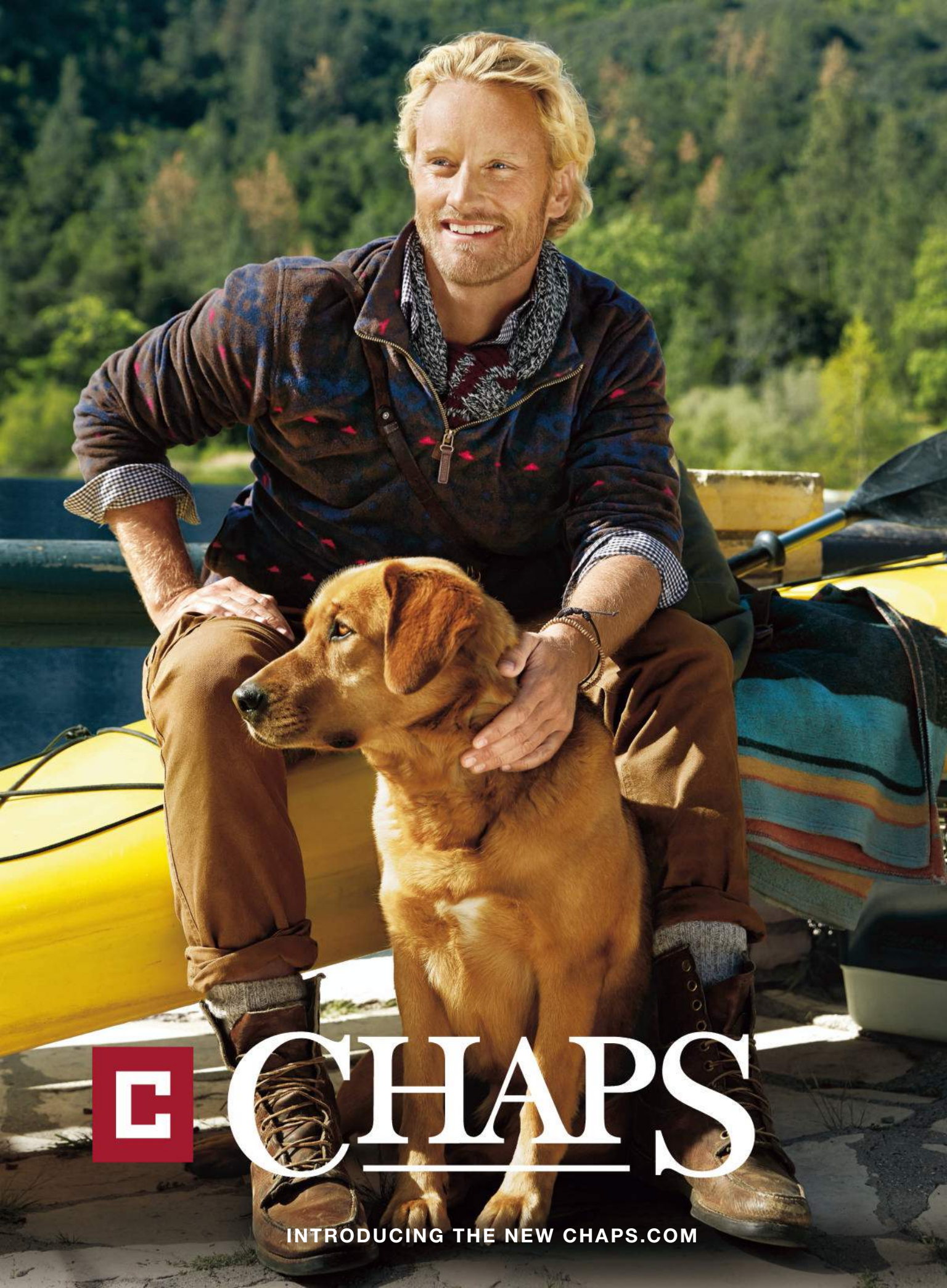
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[JABRA.COM/SPORTCOACH](http://JABRA.COM/SPORTCOACH)





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